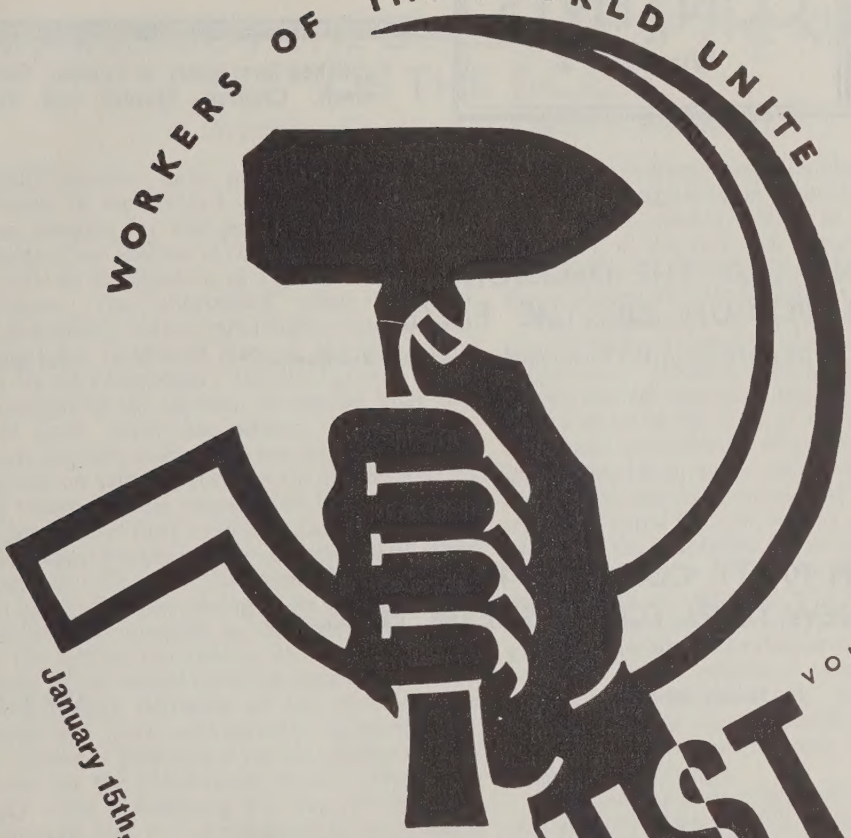

January 15th, 1933

VOLUME X

No. 1

COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

TEN CENTS

CONTENTS OVERLEAF

CONTENTS

Number 1

Published fortnightly in Russian, German, French, Chinese, Spanish and English.

1. CARRYING OUT THE DECISIONS OF THE XII PLENUM OF THE E.C.C.I.

(*Experience of the Communist Parties of Mid-Europe*) (*See page 3*)

2. TWELFTH PARTY CONGRESS IN BRITAIN MARKS NEW TURN TO BOLSHEVIK MASS WORK

By Harry Pollitt (*See page 9*)

3. THE ADOPTION OF A FIGHTING TACTICAL LINE

By A. Martynov (*See page 17*)

4. UNLEASH THE PROLETARIAN REBELLION!

Organise the Counter-Offensive of the Proletariat! (*See page 26*)
(*Speech to XII. Plenum E.C.C.I.*)
By E. Thalmann.

CARRYING OUT THE DECISIONS OF THE XII PLENUM OF THE E.C.C.I.

(Experience of the Communist Parties of Mid-Europe)

THREE months have passed since the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. The development of the class struggle for this period has stressed the correctness of the analysis of the E.C.C.I. on the end of the relative stabilisation of capitalism with still greater force. The "unexpected" events in Geneva which have already led to a rapid flight of capital from the city of the League of Nations, the quietest of capitals for the bourgeoisie ; the rapid growth of the strike struggle of the German proletariat, after two years of quiet, which has already compelled the employers in heavy industry to temporarily postpone their attack on wage agreements for the purpose of making better political preparations for this attack ; the big successes of the Communist Party of Germany in the Reichstag elections, and many other facts, show the extent to which the Communist vanguard will have to hasten the overcoming of its lagging behind the revolutionary upsurge, in the conditions of the end of the relative stabilisation of capitalism. The peculiarity of the end of capitalist stabilisation is that the revolutionary outbursts of the class struggle frequently take place unexpectedly, shortening the historic period of preparation for the revolution more and more for the Communist Parties. Hence the necessity arises of hastening the rate of solving the basic strategic task on the threshold of the decisive revolutionary battles for the dictatorship of the proletariat to the maximum extent—the task of breaking up the mass basis of social-democracy, and winning the majority of the working-class on the basis of taking the lead in all forms of the class struggle of the proletariat, the development of the economic and political struggle, and an able conversion of the economic struggle of the proletariat into a political struggle in accordance with the concrete revolutionary maturity of the conditions in the given country and in the given stage of the class struggle.

The question of checking the fulfilment of the decisions of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I., of how, and to what extent, the sections of the Communist International carry the knowledge of the general estimate of the development of the class struggle given by the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I., and the basic tactical line of the Communist vanguard to the widest masses is, therefore, of extremely great current importance. This is a question of the methods and forms of absorbing the greatest masses of workers into the struggle. It is a question of transferring the experience of one Party to another, the experience of one class conflict to another, of correcting weaknesses and mistakes "on the run," in the heat of the growing revolutionary fights, mistakes which occur, mainly, owing to a still insufficient realisation of the very fact of the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism, and its significance for the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat.

The experience of the Communist Parties of Central Europe (Germany, Czecho-Slovakia, Austria, Switzerland, Holland, Hungary) is therefore of special interest because it includes the experience of such a Party as the C.P. of Germany, the achievements and shortcomings of which are of tremendous international importance, and from which all sections of the Communist International learn. The countries of Central Europe, on the other hand, give a picture of the adaptation of the basic decisions of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. to the concrete circumstances both of countries with a rapidly maturing revolutionary crisis (Germany), and countries with a growing intensity of the class struggle, and increasing transition from economic struggles to political struggles (Czecho-Slovakia) ; or such countries as Holland, where the economic struggles of the proletariat are, so far, the only form of the revolutionary mass upsurge.

The question of carrying out the decisions of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. is not merely a question of publishing the theses, or the other resolutions. It is not only a question of discussing them at Party meetings or conferences (although this is of tremendous importance from the view point of the Bolshevik ideological training of the Communist vanguard, and its mobilisation for carrying out these decisions). Above all, it is a question of how the decisions of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. are being expressed in the mass work of the Communist Parties, and especially in the practical and concrete leadership of class struggles. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the carrying out of the decisions of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I.—at least in the Mid-European countries—is considerably better than formerly, and, in particular, better than after its predecessor, the XIth. In particular, the path travelled by the Communist Party of Germany (especially the Berlin Party organisation) from the fascist *coup d'état* of July 20th to the general strike of the transport workers of a city of four million inhabitants ; and the big successes of the Communist Party at the Reichstag elections, is one of great achievements, which the C.P.G. attained, during this period, firstly, on the basis of definitely adopting the instructions of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. in practice and cleansing

the policy of the Communist Party from the elements of opportunist distortion (group of Comrade Neumann), in the struggle against social-democracy, as in the struggle against fascism. On July 20th, the call of the Berlin organisation of the C.P.G. for a general strike, unaccompanied by a genuine Bolshevik mobilisation of the masses for struggle, turned out in practice to be mere wind popping and had to become the starting-point of serious self-criticism by the German comrades, both at the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. and the October Conference of the C.P.G.

To-day the entire Communist International observes, with the greatest satisfaction, how, under the leadership of the Communist Party, the working-class of Germany is offering growing resistance to the latest decree of the Fascist Government.

Only a few months ago the opportunists and panic-mongers, indicating the absence of a strike struggle of the proletariat in Germany, and some temporary lack of success in the election campaigns (the presidential election), drew the conclusion that the change in the relationships of class forces is shown at the present stage in the strengthening of fascism, in the growth of bourgeois reaction, and the defeats of the working-class. The opportunist platform of Humbert Droz on the eve of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. spoke of the "chain of defeats" of the Communist International, and the necessity of relying, even if only for a certain historic space of time, on a leaders' bloc with manoeuvring social-democracy. The Communist International ruthlessly repulsed these opportunist outbursts, taking the growth of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, including that in Germany, as the starting point for its estimate of the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism. The opportunists did not see the extreme intensity of class relations in Germany, which rapidly led partially rather to direct political battles than economic struggles. The fascist *coup d'etat* of the Von Papen Government at once put enormous masses of the proletariat in motion and, by taking the lead in the united front of anti-fascist actions the Communist vanguard succeeded in developing the economic struggle against the capitalist offensive, which, in turn, helped the more rapid development of the tempo of the political struggle of the German proletariat.

The very essence of the great achievements obtained by the C.P.G., on the basis of a consistent carrying into practice of the decisions of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. (which is of the most vital importance for all sections of the Comintern), consists in this realisation of the unity of the working-class under the leadership of the Communist Party, in the political sharpening of the struggle of the Berlin transport workers, the independent leadership of the strikes from beginning to end. They show *how*, in the situation of the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism, the Communist Party can and will lead the working masses, *by concrete leadership* of the struggle for their everyday interests, to the most intense *revolutionary political struggles*.

By no means can all the Parties show such good utilisation of the favourable objective conditions of the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism as the C.P.G. Even in the C.P.G. itself, this satisfactory development was far from uniform. The spontaneous striving of the working-class to unity, for resistance to the capitalist offensive and bourgeois reaction, is, in many cases, not taken proper advantage of by the Communist vanguard. To take another example, a very powerful Communist Party of Central Europe, the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia, which was able to obtain great successes in its development between the XI and the XII Plenums of the E.C.C.I. (doubling its membership, a considerable growth of the Red trade unions, etc.) on the basis of the development and leadership of the *partial economic struggles of the proletariat*, which successfully led the general strike at Brüx, was unable to take advantage of the growth of the political antagonisms in the camp, of the bourgeoisie, in the new conditions of the great intensification of political antagonisms in Czecho-Slovakia; the national struggle; the peasant movement; and the sharpening terror of the bourgeoisie against the revolutionary movement; and mobilise the masses for the *political defence*, both of the Communist Party itself and the other mass proletarian organisations, against the bourgeois-fascist terror. For a number of months systematic attempts have been made in Czecho-Slovakia to drive all revolutionary organisations underground. The Communist Party, the I.L.D. and the W.I.R. have been prohibited, and an attack is being made directly on the leaders of the Communist Party, with the aim of depriving them of parliamentary immunity. Neither the C.P. of Czecho Slovakia nor the Y.C.L. have so far been able to mobilise the working masses in defence of the revolutionary organisations. In the conditions of the intensifying situation and the increasing terror, the task of the Communists of Czecho-Slovakia is, above all, to widely *popularise the Communist Party* as the only class Party of the proletariat, and defender of the toiling masses. Only in this way is it possible to rouse the broad masses, in defence of the revolutionary vanguard. However, in spite of dozens, and maybe hundreds, of mass meetings held by the Communists and the Y.C.L., the matter of the defence of the revolutionary organisations has not yet emerged from the walls of closed meetings, has not grown into a mass factory movement, into demonstrations or protest strikes.

An inevitable consequence of this is the stoppage of the further growth of the Party organisation, and even a slowing down of the tempo of further development of economic struggles. In spite of a series of

big strikes in the recent period, as, for example, the miners' strike in Rossitz, which is now going on under the leadership of the Communist Party, a number of metal workers' strikes, builders' strikes and others, which show the existence of an objectively favourable situation, the C.P.C. and the Red trade unions, have not succeeded in developing the struggle against wage-cuts in the textile industry and among the miners of Kladno, organising mass resistance to wage reductions among Government officials, strengthened their positions among the metal workers of Prague, after the successful united front demonstration of October 20th, been able to hold their previous positions in the gigantic enterprises in Vitkovitz and the Skoda plant; and, finally, have not been able to extend the revolutionary peasant movement in the Carpathian Ukraine. The C.P.C. is experiencing the difficulties of transition to higher forms of the political mobilisation of the masses in the conditions of the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism. It is not chance that the greatest lagging behind in the Party work is taking place in the national districts—in Slovakia and the German districts of Czecho-Slovakia, where, at the moment, there is the greatest growth of the revolutionary peasant movement and the national struggle.

The Communist Parties, in spite of the inequality of their development, are now *without exception*, devoting the greatest efforts to really carrying out the decisions of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. in practice. In this the increasing Bolshevik maturity of the sections of the Comintern makes itself evident. But the big deficiencies of the C.P. of Czecho-Slovakia, like those of a number of smaller Communist Parties, become evident precisely in connection with the end of the relative stabilisation of capitalism, and the carrying out of the decisions of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I., and show *where* to seek their sources to overcome them more rapidly.

The question of the *concrete application* of the analysis of the end of the relative stabilisation of capitalism to *each separate country*, and the concrete elaboration of the immediate tactical tasks of the corresponding Communist Parties on this basis is the most serious one. There is a danger of a *mechanical* and *abstract* application of the basic analysis of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I., on the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism. The *internal* process of the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism is not *uniform* in all countries by any means. But the greatest significance of the analysis of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. consists in the fact that it indicated the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism as an *international* phenomenon, with which the development in every country is connected. This has not been *sufficiently realised*, especially in the small Parties (C.P. Holland, C.P. Austria, C.P. Swizterland) Hence searches for symptoms of the end of partial stabilisation of capitalism arise exclusively on the basis of internal development and not in connection with the entire international position. Hence arises the more or less mechanical repetition of formulae as a sort of compulsory *political signboard* behind which the *old form of practical work* continues, or even a denial of the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism for one's own country (varieties of the theory of "exceptionalism"). For example, we cannot understand the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism for Holland if we do not connect the immediate situation in Holland with the situation in the Dutch colonies—the Dutch East Indies and its population, which is ten times greater than the population of the home country, its incalculable colonial wealth on the plundering of which the stabilisation of Dutch capitalism was maintained, by draining from this colony at least a billion gulden super-profits yearly. The intense crisis in the colonies is the main source of the end of the partial stabilisation in Holland itself. This was not immediately understood by the Dutch comrades, who are now preparing for the Congress of the Communist Party of Holland, and who continue to claim in their discussion that Holland, at present, only is "approaching the end" of capitalist stabilisation. The Dutch Communist Party is beginning, precisely on the basis of the crisis, to break through the masses for the first time, achieving considerable successes in the leadership of economic struggles of the proletariat. The inability to formulate the tasks which arise from the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism in Holland, concretely for its own country, will inevitably weaken the further development of the successes of the Communist Party.

Further, we cannot understand the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism for Austria, if we ignore it as an international factor. The stabilisation of capitalism in Austria was, perhaps, the most *unstable* in all capitalist Europe. The theoreticians of Austrian social-democracy, particularly Otto Bauer, to the present moment, seize on every "rumour" of the bourgeois economists that the economic crisis is beginning to end, for the popularisation of a new source for the salvation of Austrian capitalism. This was the case recently during the "boom" on the New York Stock Exchange; such was the case last year during the search for foreign credits to save the bankrupt Rothschild bank, "Kreditantalt." The legend of the beginning of the end of the economic crisis, now spread by the bourgeois economists aims, above all, at instilling a conviction of the impregnability of capitalism, of new inevitable eras of capitalist stabilisation in the masses, and thus chaining the workers to the capitalist system. Here, more than anywhere else, the rôle of Austrian social-democracy as the main social buttress of the bourgeois in their struggle for a capitalist way

out of the crisis is shown. Here the estimate of the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism as an international estimate is of special importance. The Austrian comrades were unable to draw concrete conclusions for their own country from this which indicates here, above all, a serious increase of *propaganda of exposure* of the social-democrats. This is the more important because the leaders of Austrian social-democracy are now excelling themselves in the most "left" manoeuvres, attempting to deceive the working masses, exploiting the spontaneous striving of the workers towards unity. This was shown, in particular, by the recent Congress of the Austrian social-democrats. The Communist Party of Austria, which has grown in the last two years, but is still small compared with the mass Austrian social-democratic party, can successfully struggle for real influence on the masses if it is able to raise the campaign of exposure to a great height. However, the Austrian comrades have not been able to do this, have not understood the international significance of the Congress of the Austro-Marixsts from the viewpoint of the struggle of social-democracy for preserving its influence, not concentrated their work on the mobilisation of the masses against the new manoeuvres of social-democracy. This shows that the Austrian comrades, in spite of all the resolutions of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I., have not yet understood the tremendous significance in this country of the struggle for the social-democratic workers, and especially the work in the reformist trade unions, which has indefensibly weakened recently.

We cannot understand the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism in Switzerland without an estimate of the *specific international situation of this country*. Here, illusions regarding the firmness of the capitalist system are more possible than anywhere else. It is this very illusion of the strength of Swiss capitalism which nourished the opportunist platform of Humbert-Droz before the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. Here the danger of opportunist distortions of the tactic of the united front, and the replacement of the struggle of the working-class for unity, by a bloc of the leaders with social-democracy is most serious. The Swiss comrades are now making great efforts to eliminate the opportunist mistakes they have committed. On the basis of the decisions of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. they have been able to develop a decisive campaign against the renegade Bringolf and the manoeuvres of the famous Geneva "left" social-democrat Nichol. They have been able to stand at the head of the masses during the Geneva movement with great self-sacrifice, and considerably enlarge their political influence, which was shown by the participation of great masses of Geneva workers in the funeral of Comrade Furst, the member of the C.C. of the Swiss Communist Party who was killed. But *distrust* in their own powers, *hesitation* when faced with mass social-democracy made themselves evident in a series of *waverings* before the declaration of the *general strike* in Geneva. By negotiations with Nichol, the Communists put themselves in *dependence* on the decisions of the social-democrats and *lost time in the independent* call for a strike, when the slogan of the strike was so popular that the Geneva T.U. bureaucrats and the social-democratic committee were *compelled*, in spite of their sabotage, to agree to the strike *under mass pressure*.

This mechanical and abstract presentation of the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism inevitably leads to an under-estimation of the chief characterisation of the present period by the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. as a period of direct *transition* to a new cycle of revolutions and wars ; to the description of this period as *long and stable*, and, to some extent, even a complete new "fourth" period, which formally sounds very radical, but, in practice, leads to the weakening of the work of the Communist Parties. Even the theoretical organ of the C.P.G., "Internationale" in a special issue for September-October, 1932, dealing with the decisions of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I., writes that "the present decisive phase of the development of capitalism forms the end of the third period" (page 375). The XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. issued a warning against this very *playing with periods* ; and also against the illusion that the successes obtained by the Communist Parties in the struggle against fascism and social-democracy (undoubtedly great successes !) have made it possible already for the Communist vanguard to put the social-fascists on the defence, to destroy the fascist danger, or to liquidate the chauvinist wave. For Communist Parties there cannot be anything more harmful than such self-deception. For the very reason that the historic duration of the transition period is short and is becoming ever shorter, the tactical tasks of the Communist Parties require *still more stubborn, systematic and devoted work for destroying the mass basis* of the rotten social-buttress of the bourgeoisie, and the wild wave of *chauvinism*. However, it is precisely in the struggle against nationalism, and the *direct* menace of imperialist wars, as a consequence of the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism that the Communist Parties have done extremely little since the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. With the exception of Germany and Czecho-Slovakia, the resolution of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. on the struggle against war has practically not even been popularised (and even in these Parties, the popularisation of these resolutions leaves much to be desired). With the exception of Germany the resolution of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. has been fulfilled on the question of the *concretisation* of the struggle against war and the conversion of this struggle into a *mass* campaign practically nowhere. In Germany itself,

where recently there were a whole series of actions by the C.P.G. against war and nationalism (the speech of Comrade Thälmann in Paris, the manifesto of the C.P.G. on October 23 against the Versailles system, the manifesto of the C.C., C.P.G. and the C.P.F. on October 26), there is not yet a *concrete* struggle against war, as stated by Comrade Thälmann at the Berlin Party Conference. The Berlin Party Conference raised such concrete tasks for the Berlin-Brandenburg district (which adjoins imperialist Poland) as the struggle against new patriotic films in Berlin, the exposure of the aggressive imperialist character of the autumn manoeuvres of the Reichswehr, the struggle against chauvinist propaganda under the flag of "the defence of the population of Berlin from aerial gas attack," for the first time, etc.

In Czecho-Slovakia, after the successful recruiting campaign, it was only very recently that the Y.C.L. began to hold anti-war conferences (Slovakia), forming anti-war committees at these conferences. But it was precisely in Czecho-Slovakia that the Communist Party lost considerable time in the struggle against nationalism and chauvinism, in connection with the growth of national antagonisms in that country on the basis of the further sharpening of the crisis, and the attempts of the Czech bourgeoisie to emerge from the crisis at the expense of the subject peoples. *The under-estimation* of the national question in Czecho-Slovakia found expression in the inability to combine the *peasant and national* movement in Slovakia. But this under-estimation was particularly brought to light in the *German* districts of Czecho-Slovakia, where some comrades (in practice) continued to defend the opportunist formula which had been rejected by the last Congress of the C.P.Cz. on "Czecho-Slovakian imperialism" (and not Czech imperialism), under the flag of the "left" formula that the German bourgeoisie in Czecho-Slovakia are merely *simple agents of Czech imperialism.* As the result, these comrades overlooked the growth of fascism in the German districts, which came forward "unexpectedly" for them at the last communal elections in the German districts of Czecho-Slovakia. At present the C.P.Cz. is *making serious efforts* to *catch up* this lost time. This is shown by the Party Conference in Reichenberg, a whole series of concrete measures by the C.P.Cz. on the national question, the speech of Comrade Gadek in Parliament with a programme of social and national liberation. The Party must continue to make up for lost time with still greater energy, rectifying mistakes in the course of the struggle, and also the excesses which have already been committed in the *process of rectifying* the shortcomings. For example, we must not launch such slogans, as was done in the programme of social and national liberation, as the slogan of "giving work to German workers in German districts." This produces, in practice, an imitation of the slogan of the Hakenkreutzler† that "only Germans can help Germans," which, in reality, does not weaken, but nourishes chauvinism in the German districts. On the other hand, this loss of time in the struggle against chauvinism has already made itself felt in a symptomatic growth of fascism in the Czech districts themselves, where, at the recent elections of factory committees in Moravsky Ostrav, all parties *except the Czech fascists* lost ground (including the Communists) the German S.Ds. 6.5 per cent., the Czech S.Ds. 19 per cent., the Red T.Us. 11.7 per cent., while the Czech Fascists *gained* 13.4 per cent. This fact must compel the C.P.Cz. to raise the question of the causes of the lost time and the method of regaining it with the greatest seriousness.

Nothing could be more harmful to the Communist Party than the self-deception that social-democracy is completely *on the defence* everywhere. The examples already given show the extent to which the social-democrats can still manoeuvre, using, first of all, an opportunist faith in the "left" manoeuvres of social-democracy in various sections of the Communist Party, and also the absence of a consistent, systematic and decisive struggle against these manoeuvres by our Party. The Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia, for example, was really able to compel the social-democrats to pass to the defensive during the strike at Brüx, the demonstration of metal workers at Prague, and at present in Rossitz. But both Comrade Gottwald at the Prague Party Conference, and Comrade Schwerm in a special article, indicate a series of very big weaknesses and opportunist mistakes in the practical operation of the tactic of the *united front*, which, in particular, are the causes of such failures as at the elections for the factory committees in Witkovitz and in the Skoda plants. However, it is precisely in Czecho-Slovakia that the comrades so frequently repeat, including speeches at the last Plenum of the C.C. C.P.Cz., that social-democracy has already been driven to the defensive in the sphere of the united front. But, in reality, Czech social-democracy is still manoeuvring extremely seriously against the Communists, as these examples show, launching the most demagogic slogans such as "strikes for socialism." In reality there is *not yet any serious turn* in the revolutionary work in the reformist trade unions, and the positions of the trade union bureaucrats are still very strong. And this is in spite of the fact that Czech social-democracy participates in the government and all the repression used against the Communist Party, the revolutionary trade unions, and other revolutionary mass organisations of the proletariat.

All this is because there is not yet a real struggle against social-democracy, corresponding to the *present conditions* of the end of the partial stabilisation

† Fascists. Ed.

of capitalism, and the *present manoeuvres* of social-democracy. This not only applies to the C.P.Cz., but to every single Communist Party. Even in Germany, after the elections to the Reichstag, after November 6, some organs of the Party Press such as the *Sachsische Arbeiterzeitung* (the organ of the district committee of the C.P.G. in Saxony), wrote that the reduction of 700,000 in the social-democratic poll meant "a reduction in the importance of German social-democracy for the bourgeoisie as their chief social buttress." This completely diverges from the line of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

The Communist Parties have nowhere yet been able to get to grips with the problem of winning the broad masses of social-democratic workers, in spite of the ever-growing crisis of social-democracy. It is no chance that there is not a single country where there is even a *serious beginning* of a change in the work of the Communist Parties inside the reformist trade unions. This is shown by the unanimous speeches of all the speakers at the Berlin Party Conference, which correctly pointed out the extreme weakness of revolutionary work *inside the Metal Workers' Union* as one of the chief causes why it was not possible to *rapidly extend* the strike of the Berlin transport workers.

In the sphere of the *unemployed movement* a change can be seen. The fourth winter of hunger, bringing unheard of sufferings to millions of unemployed, is already opening with a period of enlivenment in the revolutionary movement of the unemployed. In Germany, the Communist Party and the revolutionary T.U. organisations have correctly *concretised* the task of mass work in the conditions of the growing revolutionary unrest among the unemployed, launching the simple and concrete slogan : "Bread, coal and potatoes," which will undoubtedly reach *enormous masses of the unemployed.* The lifting of this elementary mass movement for bread to the level of a political struggle will depend on the Communist Party itself, to the extent that such a political intensification is inevitable in the present conditions of Germany. In Czecho-Slovakia the unemployed are demonstrating under the leadership of the Communist Party in Komotau, seizing the municipalities in Cashau and near Prague, organising revolutionary conferences of the unemployed in Reichenberg and Friedland. But all this is only a beginning. And all this shows the *tremendous revolutionary possibilities possessed by the Communist Parties* if they are able to organise and lead the struggle of the unemployed for their most burning interests.

Such are the first important lessons of the carrying out of the decisions of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. for three months. A new feature in the objectiv situation consists in the *rapidly changing relationship of class forces to the benefit of the working-class*, in favour of the forces of revolution. It depends on the Communist Parties themselves how short will be the historic interval which lies between the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism and its growth into a real revolutionary situation. The struggle for the development of political and organisational *initiative* in the localities, the struggle against all *schematism*, *bureaucratism*, *opportunist passivity* and especially a struggle against all *opportunist distortions* of the line of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. ; first of all, against right opportunism which is extremely dangerous at the present stage, will ensure that the Communist vanguard will convert this historic interval into the *shortest* historic interval. The Communist Party of Germany has already shown by the experience of struggle against the opportunist group of Neumann, what is meant, in present conditions, by a rapid cleansing of Bolshevik policy from opportunist distortions. By taking this path, mobilising the masses on the basis of the leadership of *all forms of partial economic and political fights*, imbuing every partial struggle of the proletariat and all its mass work with the slogan of the power of the working-class (which, in passing, is very slightly done by *all* Communist Parties), the Communist vanguard will be able to *prepare for the revolution* in a brief period *and lead the broad masses of workers to the decisive revolutionary fights.*

(*Continued from page* 44.)

inflict one or two wounds upon fascism ideologically, at this or that point, not only to tear away the mass of its adherents from Social-Democracy, not only to let loose mass struggles for wages and bread, not only to attain a higher level of the revolutionary struggle—over and above this, we must bring the masses nearer to the decisive struggle for proletarian power, win them over and activise them for the great struggle for the revolutionary way out of the crisis.

Germany possesses a mighty significance for all Central Europe ! If we succeed in storming the fortresses there, in overthrowing the fascist dictatorship, and setting up the dictatorship of the proletariat that will mean not only the victory of the revolution in Germany, but the victory of the revolution in all Europe ; it will mean rendering the greatest revolutionary support for the accelerating of socialist construction in the Soviet Union. (*Applause.*)

This is how we formulate our tasks. Such are our victorious prospects ! Thus do we set about carrying out the decisions of the XII Plenum. Thus do we fight, shoulder to shoulder with our brother Parties under the leadership of the Comintern, with Comrade Stalin at the head, for the victory of socialism ! We shall and must be the victors ! (*Loud applause.*)

TWELFTH PARTY CONGRESS IN BRITAIN MARKS NEW TURN TO BOLSHEVIK MASS WORK

By Harry Pollitt

THE XII Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain was held in London in November. It took place just after the 15th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution, when the workers of the world were marking the triumph of the first Five-Year Plan which had been carried through in four years in spite of great difficulties, and pledging anew their determination to defend the Soviet Union. The XII Congress met at a time when the contrast between the growing crisis in the capitalist world and the growth of socialist construction in the Soviet Union is the dominating factor in the whole situation ; when the ruling class are making desperate efforts to save themselves by driving the workers into poverty and starvation and towards a new world war ; but also at a time when the toiling masses throughout the world are rising in revolt against their oppressors.

LEEDS—AND THE TWELFTH PARTY CONGRESS

It is well to recall that the XI Congress was held at Leeds three years ago, just at the commencement of the world economic crisis. For two years prior to the Leeds Congress the Party leadership had accepted in words the analysis of the Communist International and the revolutionary line of *class against class*. But in *deeds* the leadership fought against this line, and still clung to their belief in the further stabilisation of capitalism. The financial crash in Wall Street which heralded the commencement of the world economic crisis, took place just before the Leeds Congress, and gave a rude awakening to these theories. The experience of life was forcing itself forward to demonstrate the correctness of the analysis of the Communist International. At Leeds, the line of *class against class* was adopted amid enthusiasm, the decision was taken to launch the "Daily Worker" (sabotaged by the old leadership) and a new Party leadership elected, pledged to carry out the line of the Communist International.

All that has happened in the past three years has served to emphasise the correctness of the general line laid down at the Leeds Congress. Yet, the isolation of the Party from the masses has not yet been overcome. What is the reason for this situation ? Big efforts have been made to carry out the Leeds Congress decisions to put forward the line of *class against class* and conduct an energetic struggle against Right opportunism as the main danger. But no such big efforts have been made on the other aspect of the line of *class against class*, that of carrying out "revolutionary work in the factories and trade unions," in order to build up the independent leadership and organisation of the economic struggles, and a mass Communist Party. This is the main reason for the continued isolation of the British Party from the masses. In the Open Letter of the Communist International to the Leeds Party Congress, it is stated :

> "The Communist Party of Great Britain must definitely understand that it is useless talking about a mass Bolshevik Party, about the leading rôle of the Party in the class struggle, unless it has close and constant contact with the masses, unless it closely studies the mass economic and political struggles, unless it actually organises and leads these struggles, and unless it systematically, day in and day out, exposes the treacherous and social-fascist rôle of the "Labour Government and its henchmen."

It is the failure to carry out this aspect of the Leeds Congress decisions which explains the continued isolation of the Party from the masses. True, there are still opportunist mistakes. No consistent daily drive has yet been given to the carrying out in practice the policy of *class against class*, because correct methods of revolutionary mass work in the factories, trade unions, and localities have not been applied.

The results of the General Election last year revealed still further the dangerous situation for the Party. This situation forced a self-critical analysis of the serious danger confronting the Party. At the January Plenum of the Central Committee this year, a new turn was made to carry out revolutionary mass work. This resolution emphasised that :

> "Without a determined buckling down *to the daily systematic struggle for the masses* against the reformist trade union bureaucracy *in all trade union branches and factories the Communist Party can never become a real mass Party*."

At the same time, the whole line of the resolution emphasised that the Party could only break through its isolation by a determined struggle to undermine the influence of the Labour Party and the I.L.P. and declared that the Party :

> "*Cannot be sure of any solid influence among the masses unless it sees to it that throughout all its mass work the demarcation in principle between its line and the reformist line is expressed in the clearest terms.*"

Even although the Leeds Congress marked a definite break with the policy of Right opportunism and an important stage in the history of the Party, it was *the big experiences of mass struggle in carrying out the January resolution which formed the main basis of*

discussion at the XII Congress. In view of the growing economic crisis and seriousness of the war situation, the Congress was vital for the Party and the working-class in general. Taking place within two months after the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I., the Congress was able to learn a great deal from the analysis of the new situation made by the XII Plenum and clear guidance in its efforts to win the majority of the working-class. The analysis of the decisions of the XII Plenum, together with due consideration of the mass work experiences of the C.P.G.B. during the past year, determined the character of the work of the XII Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

THE REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

The report of the Central Committee to the XII Party Congress was the most exhaustive and self-critical ever presented to any previous Congress in Britain. What was the character of the report? Commencing with a review of the XII Plenum resolutions and their significance to the British Party, the report then made a living contrast between Britain—the oldest capitalist country in the world, and the Soviet Union—the young and growing country of Socialism. The thesis of the XII Plenum, that the growing world economic crisis is leading to a "transition to new wars and revolutions" is revealed in the desperate efforts of the British ruling class to find a way out of the crisis by further wholesale attacks on the workers, the most brutal suppression of colonial peoples in India and Ireland, and the extension of its tariff policy at Ottawa which is aimed at the U.S.A., which in its turn is closely linked with the struggle over the payment of war debts. At the same time the Ottawa decisions are directed against the U.S.S.R., as shown by the denunciation of the trade agreement with the U.S.S.R. The outstanding feature in the present situation is the shameful lying campaign of the bourgeoisie against the Soviet Union (following upon the denunciation of the trade agreement with the Soviet Union) which is increasing precisely because of the difficulties of the crisis and the growing tension between the imperialist Powers. This expresses the capitalist robbers' common hatred and fear of the U.S.S.R.

The extent of the crisis is shown even more clearly in the determined efforts of the ruling class to make the workers bear the burden of the crisis. The big "economy" attack launched by the National Government last year, was only the beginning of a much wider attack to deprive the British workers of a widespread system of social services which had been forced from capitalism in its relatively prosperous days before the war. £88,100,000 have already been robbed from the workers in the past year by 10 per cent. cut in unemployed benefit, the brutal operation of the Means Test for all workers unemployed for more than six months, reductions in benefit for sick workers, and cuts in education and social services, and in the wages of State employees. Now the National Government is launching a further attack on unemployed benefits (particularly young workers), proposing compulsory forced labour as a condition for receiving unemployed benefit, and is considering the extension of "physical training" for the youth along the lines of military preparation similar to that enforced in Germany. Together with this, the report of the Royal Commission on Local Government recommends a further "economy" of £40 million by drastic attacks on poor law relief and educational services.

The "economy" measures of the ruling class are not confined to the unemployed and social services. During the past year big attacks have been launched upon the wages and conditions of the miners, textile workers, dockers and other workers. In all industries wages have been reduced by £203,000 per week since January this year. Further attacks are now being launched on the railway workers and textile workers, and preparations for attacks on the miners within six months. Together with these all-round attacks on wages and conditions, it is impossible to estimate the terrible effects of increased rationalisation in every industry and the widespread effect of increasing unemployment. *All this is taking place at a time when the tariff policy of the National Government is increasing the cost of living.*

The report of the Central Committee to the Congress dealt not only with wages and unemployment, but made a startling revelation of the increasing death rate of children, and working women giving birth to children, under-nourished children, and overcrowding of working-class families, etc. One can say that the C.C.'s report is a modern picture of Engel's book on "The Conditions of the Working-Class in England in 1844," of the "mass pauperisation," the appalling starvation and misery, to which the ruling class are driving the workers in their efforts to solve the crisis.

But at the same time grows the fighting resistance of the workers to the capitalist offensive. This is shown not only in the number and extent of the strike struggles, unemployed demonstrations and street fights, but in the *character* of these struggles and the fact that they are conducted in defiance of the reformist leaders. The strike of the Lancashire cotton workers was carried on after three years in which the employers attacked mill after mill, and the reformist leaders tried to disorganise and demoralise the ranks of the workers. But being unable to prevent strike action against wage-cuts, the reformist trade union leaders called the strike in order to be better able to defeat it at the earliest possible moment. Never before in the history of the Lancashire cotton workers was there displayed such revolutionary determination as was shown in the big mass demon-

strations and mass pickets against the "blacklegs." The unemployed hunger march to London had a wide mass response throughout the country and struck fear into the hearts of the ruling class. The capitalist Press was furious. It carried out a lying campaign against the leaders of the hunger march and screamed for drastic measures to prevent the marchers reaching London. But the marchers fought their way through to London, where this movement met with a tremendous response. The London workers presented a solid front in support of the hunger marchers and fought against the police in street battles which rivalled even the heroic struggles of Belfast and Birkenhead. *The growth of the revolutionary fighting spirit of the British workers confirms the fact of the revolutionary upsurge of the workers and peasants throughout the capitalist countries and the Colonies*, as pointed out in the theses of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

It is in this situation that the reformist leaders are carrying out new manoeuvres in a desperate attempt to disorganise the mass struggle of the working-class. Having agreed in principle with the Means Test, prepared hereby the way for the attacks of the National Government, and helped to carry them out, the Labour Party leaders make brave speeches against the National Government. They endeavour to hide their daily traitorous practice by distortion of socialist phrases, putting forward schemes of capitalist reorganisation (public control, transport boards, etc.) in the guise of "drastic socialist plans." The revolt of the rank and file of the I.L.P. against the leadership forced Maxton and Co. to manoeuvre and put forward the policy of disaffiliation from the Labour Party. The I.L.P. leaders now talk of a "new Marxist policy" and the need for bold "socialist planning," but *deny the need for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the setting up of the dictatorship of the working-class.*

But these manoeuvres indicate that down below there is a tremendous ferment among the rank and file members of the I.L.P. and a genuine desire to struggle against the capitalist offensive. On this question the report of the C.C. put forward an important question. Should the Party try to win over decisive sections of the I.L.P. ? Then went on to declare emphatically *Yes*. This would be a serious blow against reformism and strengthen the Communist Party and the revolutionary fight of the workers. How is this to be done ? By a definite turn to united front activity from below, drawing militant I.L.P. members into strike activity, trade union work, mass struggle against unemployment, and the fight against war and intervention in the Soviet Union. By overcoming sectarian tendencies to lump together I.L.P. members with the leaders, and expose the policy of the leaders in a more convincing way, on the basis of the experiences of I.L.P. members in struggle, not shrinking from comradely polemics with rank and file I.L.P. members in the fundamental questions of parliamentary democracy and proletarian dictatorship, of revolution and violence, and initiating discussions on "Moscow's reply to the I.L.P.," etc. And all this must be done in a manner to make these discussions get inside the ranks of the I.L.P. In this way, it will be possible to win over, not only members and branches, but decisive sections of the I.L.P., and destroy the influences of the I.L.P. leaders who are the most dangerous enemies of the workers. This policy of course implies ruthless resistance to moods and tendencies that try to reduce the united front with I.L.P. members to a policy of bloc with the leaders of this Party.

The report of the C.C. dealt exhaustively with the lessons of economic struggles and the methods of building up the revolutionary trade union opposition. The Minority Movement still remains a small sectarian organisation, with little or no contact with the militant movements springing up in the factories and trade unions. *The biggest defect of all the work of the Party is the failure to carry out mass work in the reformist trade unions.* In the preparatory discussion before the Congress, the trade union question received most attention and important differences on this question were revealed. The report of the C.C. declared that there must be an intense drive to carry out mass work in the reformist unions, and all obstacles and doubt on this question must be removed. This does not mean confining mass work within the framework of the trade unions. But it means *winning the support of the trade union members, and the lower organs of the trade unions, as an essential part of the mass work in the factories, and building leadership in the factories to lead economic struggles.* In the pre-Congress discussion on this question, certain misconceptions have arisen due to certain unclear formulations which I had made, that might be used to distort the line of the workers' independent fight and leadership. But these were of secondary importance to the main line of my drive. In this connection, the Congress resolution on economic struggles makes it quite clear that :

> "The Party must fight irreconcilably against all Right opportunist deviations and tendencies, as the main dangers, which are expressing themselves in a denial of the possibility of winning the workers away from the influence of the reformists, and of organising the independent leadership of the struggle (trade union legalism, policy of 'make the leaders fight,' etc.), but such a fight can only be successful when the Party at the same time leads the irreconcilable fight against the 'left' and sectarian deviations, which are expressing themselves specially in the hesitating and vacillating on

the necessity of revolutionary mass work in the trade unions."

All the lessons of recent economic struggles, particularly that of the London busmen, show what an important force are the trade union branches in building independent leadership in the factories. These experiences show clearly that the revolutionary trade union opposition can only be built through mass work in the factories and trade unions, developing the movements now arising among the London busmen, Welsh tinplate workers, metal workers, dockers, and textile workers. The first step is to strengthen these movements from the bottom without intrusion from the top, working towards district conferences, setting up Communist fraction in this movement to consolidate them under one leadership, and leading to a gigantic national conference to build the basis for the revolutionary opposition throughout the country.

In face of the tremendous attack of the capitalists on unemployed workers, the report of the C.C. gave considerable attention to the methods of mass struggle against unemployment and the Means Test. Although big unemployed demonstrations and street battles have taken place, and the hunger march to London roused the whole country, the mass fight against unemployment is all too weak and has only reached the first stages. At the same time, the big weakness about the unemployed demonstrations is the *failure to build an organised mass movement of the unemployed and break down the sectarianism of the N.U.W.M.* This means a determined drive to lead the daily struggles of the unemployed in the streets and around the Labour Exchanges, winning support for local programmes of demands and organising the fight to achieve these demands, fighting for the feeding of school schildren, etc. This is the basis for organising the unemployed out of mass struggle and building broad unemployed councils.

Finally, the imperative need of struggling for a mass Communist Party was emphasised as something which must run like a red line through every phase of mass activity and personal work in the factories and trade unions. Whilst the Party membership is bigger now than at any time since 1926, not the whole Party has already realised the whole significance of struggle for Party influence among the masses, and for a mass Party. The weakness of the C.P.G.B. is shown in the fact that during this year alone the fluctuation of membership is at least 40 per cent. Most recruits enter the Party through general agitation, and very few through the leadership of daily struggles in the factories and trade unions. This is brought out clearly in the low proportion of members in the trade unions and the factories. Every Party member must now devote constant attention, not only to recruiting new members, but to keeping them in the Party, developing the interests of new members and bringing them into activity.

THE SITUATION CONFRONTING THE PARTY

How far has the Party made progress in this important situation? This was the outstanding question dealt with in the Congress discussion and in the report. Since January, a real turn to mass work has been made in the factories and trade unions, and among the unemployed. The four main districts in the country (Scotland, London, Lancashire, South Wales) were selected for concentration, and within these districts particular factories and trade union branches were chosen where the main activities and forces of the districts would be centred. In all more than fifty important factories and trade union branches were selected, covering the important industries of mining, textiles, railways, metal and docks. This method was also applied in the remaining five districts, but on a much smaller scale.

The turn to mass work in line with these methods of concentration has changed the whole outlook. Particularly in the four main districts, the experiences of mass work showed that the Party was in closer contact with the workers than ever before. The report to the Congress was able to deal with concrete experiences in the pits, railway depots, and textile mills, and the lessons in the carrying out of mass work in the trade union branches. Amongst the unemployed there was greater attention to the daily issues in everyday life, related to the bigger questions affecting the unemployed as a whole. Through the direct participation of the Party leadership in the mass work in the four main districts, new problems of mass work had to be considered, which never before existed as problems precisely because of the isolation of the Party from the masses.

The report and the discussion showed that the first steps had been made in the turn to mass work. The Party had played a bigger part in the mass struggles of the workers. The Party membership had been doubled in the past year. There were eighty-two factory cells and a beginning made in transforming the Party into a Bolshevik organisation.

But these small improvements indicate, on the one hand, what could have been achieved if the whole membership were actually carrying out the January resolution, and on the other hand, emphasise the dangerous "lagging behind" of the Party in so favourable a situation. The Party failed to play a decisive rôle in the important economic struggles, has not succeeded in any great degree in destroying the poisonous influence of the reformists, has not made any real effort to develop a broad organised movement of the unemployed, and failed to recruit workers (or to keep new members) to the Party in accordance with the big favourable possibilities.

The serious situation which therefore confronts the Party is its inability to take advantage of the favourable situation, lagging behind events, and together with it, weakness of mass work, inability to develop the revolutionary understanding of the workers in the course of its existing mass activity.

CHARACTER OF THE CONGRESS DISCUSSION.

But the Congress discussion gave the guarantee that the Party would be able to overcome its isolation from the masses. The speeches of the delegates were an expression of the new fighting spirit of the masses. Nearly one-half of the delegates were new members who had entered the Party since the Leeds Congress three years ago : a big number had joined during the past year. Not only did the delegates give experiences of activities in the factories and trade unions, and the mass struggles of the workers, but almost every speech was *full of confidence and revolutionary enthusiasm.* At the same time, the dominant note in the discussion was *not* self-satisfaction at the meagre results of mass work, *but a healthy self-criticism and alarm in view of the continued isolation of the Party in such a favourable situation.*

Several delegates pointed out from their own experiences how the Party had made big strides in breaking down its isolation in the factories and trade unions. An indication of this is given in the following extract from the speech of a delegate from a factory cell in an important railway repair shop in Glasgow :

"In connection with the recent Lancashire cotton strike, we raised this question in a trade union branch and we were able, by virtue of the fact that we had a decision taken to take the matter from the trade union branch into a reformist Mondist works committee, and despite the opposition in that body, we were able to carry out weekly collections which amounted, over a period of weeks, to £60. This was collected, in one factory alone and sent direct to the W.I.R. strike relief committee in Lancashire. At the same time, comrades, the question of the national hunger march was raised and at this same factory £3 12s. was collected and sent on to the national headquarters of the hunger marchers. All this by virtue of the fact that we raised these questions not only in the reformist trade union branch covering this factory, but also took it from there into the Mondist works committee and made considerable use of these bodies, and won mass support in the strike and in a practical fashion for the hunger marchers.

"Now there is a question of there having existed in the past a tendency to shout abstract slogans, to chalk up around the factories, pits and docks, the abstract slogans and general slogans of our Party and the failure to understand that unless we can concretise these slogans in the sense that the workers actually feel that they apply to them, we cannot make headway. For instance, in the factory of which I have experience, one actually felt that there has been a barrier erected as a result of the application of wrong tactics. The workers in the factory feel that the comrades of the Communist Party in the past have shown a certain amount of irresponsibility in making general appeals—calls for strike action on any and every occasion and the workers simply marching past—not treating them seriously. To give one instance of this concretising of immediate demands. In this factory we never had on any occasion a demonstration. We had been able, it is true, to draw a very small percentage of the workers from this factory on to demonstrations in the evening, but as a result of the correct application of the Party line in the light of the January Revolution, we were able to get a whole department—something like 250 men, engineers, craftsmen, and so on, to demonstrate during working hours, to stop work, to parade just as the unemployed comrades parade in the streets. They lined up in their fours, disciplined, understanding what they wanted, and not only did they march to the offices, but they took a route which had a certain strategical importance in that it raised the spirit in every department in the works. They marched through every other department in the works, raising immediately in front of the total 2,500 odd workers, how it was possible to fight for very small demands. On this occasion the demand was a very simple one —it was for the recognition of a committee, and it only needed five minutes in front of the offices and the management to convince them that they had to grant this demand immediately to get the men back to work because they felt that this spirit and these tactics, if allowed to be carried on and developed, would mean an end to the influence of the reformist works committee, and we also found the whole of the reformist works committee immediately attempted to come in at the head of the demonstration, and we were able to expose them in a fine fashion, not the abstract manner of merely telling the workers that they were reformists, and proving concretely the anti-working-class character of their rôle by virtue of the fact that their tactics and policy are anti-working-class."

That this is not an isolated example, is shown by the speech of a delegate from a factory cell in London who told us that owing to special attention to the work of individual Party members, in this case, to the work of one member employed in the railway depot, it was possible —by rousing him to activity and initiative—to raise Communist authority and set up a strong cell in this depot. This is what he said :

"We decided after we worked up our cell and on the basis of our trade union activity and on the depot to test our comrades in the struggle in the forthcoming L.D.C. elections which stand for a lot for the workers in the railway industry. So we saw that at this juncture to run our candidates for the L.D.C. in opposition to the trade union branch candidates with whom we did not establish sufficient contact in the branch to get the branch to back our comrades. He polled for the first time, polling 322 votes against the highest official branch candidate's 325. On this basis of his year's work on the L.D.C., taking up every single grievance that came before him, daily discussions with the workers, daily fights with the foremen, he was able to establish quite a good connection with the workers there, and also bring the other comrades in the cell into good prominence in order to run them for the next L.D.C. election. He waged three fights with the foreman, who ordered our comrade outside the office. Remarks were heard from the workers

"This is the first time in the history of any L.D.C. representative that we have had our member ordered outside the foreman's office, and never have we heard such good reports of what happens behind closed doors, and how the other reactionaries act."

"Our comrade, by being on the L.D.C., was able to expose and will be able to concretely expose at some future date, the whole function of this body.

"On the next occasion he put up he polled the magnificent number of 406 votes, the highest ever recorded, a certain victory against the trade union bureaucracy, with which none of the workers had much sympathy.

"On top of this we were able to put forward our other two comrades at the next L.D.C. elections and they polled 298 and 292 votes, only just falling short of getting on the committee itself."

There were sixty-six delegates who took part in the discussion throughout the Congress and most of them able to speak of good experiences similar to those of these two delegates. Those who have attended all the previous Party Congresses of the British Party declared that never before had there been a discussion which reflected so close a contact with the masses, and which gave confidence in the ability of the Party to strengthen its work and lead the mass struggles of the workers.

SHORTCOMINGS OF THE TWELFTH CONGRESS.

However, it is necessary to point out that the Congress discussion revealed serious weaknesses—weaknesses which are a reflection of the unsatisfactory situation throughout the Party as a whole. These political and organisational weaknesses can be dealt with under four main heads :

First, the improvement in mass work represents only the first steps. The Party as a whole has not yet made the turn to mass work. As also in the given phases, the extension and strengthening of the economic struggles of the proletariat is of paramount importance in the development of the revolutionary struggle of the working-class, the Party must present this extension and strengthening in the light of struggles for a revolutionary way out of the crisis, of preparation of decisive struggles for power, for proletarian dictatorship. Branches of industry, such as the mining and textile industries are for many years, in the throes of a serious crisis. Governments have appointed many Royal Commissions to make proposals for capitalist reorganisation ; and the Labour Party and trade union leaders have supported these proposals. Still, the crisis continues and time after time the employers systematically attack the wages and conditions of the working-class ; and the reformist leaders continue to ask the workers to make sacrifices in order to "save the industry."

In this situation the Party has made insufficient efforts to put forward the revolutionary solution for the crisis, in the light of the experiences of the workers themselves. The Congress discussion revealed that the imperative need for this revolutionary propaganda is not understood throughout the Party. Another aspect of this weakness is the falling off of agitation and activity against war and armed intervention, after the Amsterdam Conference, and the failure to give sufficient attention to the important struggle of the colonial workers and peasants in India and Ireland, and particularly the weak campaign for the release of the Meerut prisoners.

Secondly, the Party has allowed the reformist leaders to carry out successful manoeuvres to harness the rising discontent of the workers against the National Government, and has not throughout all its mass work expressed in the clearest terms 'the demarcation in principle between its line and the reformist line." The experience in the municipal elections and the hunger march, show that there are still strong right opportunist tendencies towards being deceived by these manoeuvres and making agreements with reformist leaders, which have the effect of disorganising the mass struggle of the workers. On the other hand, there are sectarian tendencies which express themselves in general denunciation and abuse of reformist leaders, lumping together the leaders and members of reformist organisations and resistance in practice to the united front from below.

The Congress discussion also failed to give adequate attention to the need for destroying the influence of the reformists. This was particularle shown in the absence of any comment or concrete discussion in regard to the I.L.P.

Thirdly, inadequate attention was given in the Congress discussion to the preparation for immediate economic struggles and the methods of building the revolutionary trade union opposition. The Congress emphatically and decisively rejected tendencies to neglect work in the reformist trade unions, to build barriers against carrying out this work by superficial arguments about the impossibility of "capturing the apparatus," and to regard independent leadership of economic struggles as something entirely separate from the trade unions. The Congress emphatically declared that the winning over of the lower organs of the trade unions was an essential part of the task of building the revolutionary trade union opposition, and was strengthened in this view by the valuable experiences of recent economic struggles, and particularly the successful movement among the London busmen.

But despite this, there was little response in the discussion (apart from the expressions of general agreement) to the proposals in the report to build the revolutionary trade union opposition from the bottom out of the struggles of the workers in the factories and trade unions, commencing from the basis of the "unofficial" movements now springing up. At the present moment there is the movement of the London busmen embracing bus-garages and trade union branches, the unofficial movement of the tinplate workers within the union embracing sixty-four union branches, the Members' Rights Movement in the A.E.U. embracing hundreds of union branches, and the beginnings of the Solidarity Movement of the Lancashire cotton workers. Together with the existing groups of the Minority Movement and the two revolutionary unions (Scottish Miners and United Clothing Workers' Union), these movements represent a mass basis for building the revolutionary opposition instead of formal recruiting to the M.M. and imposing the M.M. from above. But this perspective of building the revolutionary opposition to lead economic struggles was not thoroughly understood and did not receive adequate attention in the Congress discussion.

Finally, the weakest phase of the discussion was the failure to deal with the extreme poverty of new leading forces and the building of the Party in the factories. Numerous examples were given of methods of work which prevented the development of new forces.

The organisational report to the Congress revealed that the Party membership was 5,600, that there were eighty-two factory cells with 550 members and 100 street cells with 1,500 members. This means that over 3,000 members are not organised in basic units (factory cells and street cells), but are working loosely in area groups and aggregate meetings similar to the Social-Democratic organisations. Whilst the report and the discussion emphasised greater attention to consistent recruiting from the factories and trade unions, the organisation of the membership into basic units, and the bringing forward of new cadres to strengthen the lower Party organs, the outstanding importance of building the Party along these lines did not emerge from the discussion.

PERSPECTIVES AND NEXT TASKS.

What are the positive results of the XII Congress? It put forward a clear analysis of the situation confronting the working-class due to the increasing intensity of the world economic crisis and war situation, and its special features in Britain and throughout the British Empire. The character and extent of the capitalist offensive against the workers was thoroughly discussed, together with the new manoeuvres of the reformist leaders. The necessity of strengthening revolutionary mass work in the factories and trade unions, and among the unemployed, impressed every delegate at the Congress. *This is a big advance.* Particularly, because the failure to carry out mass work has been the biggest weakness since the Leeds Congress. Discussions throughout the Party in the past three years have shown that the Leeds Congress decisions were interpreted to mean that independent mass activity was "independent" of the reformist trade unions! The discussion prior to and during the Congress, and the line of the Congress resolutions, had made it quite clear that *no barrier must be placed to prevent a tremendous drive for mass work in the reformist trade unions, and to win the lower organs of the trade unions as an essential part of the revolutionary opposition to lead economic struggles.*

Despite the weaknesses of the Congress discussion, the experience of mass struggle, the confident note throughout the Congress, was the determination to strengthen revolutionary mass work and overcome these weaknesses. What are the perspectives before the Party? In the few weeks following the Congress, there is already ample evidence of the growing tension between Britain and the U.S.A., accompanied by intense hostility and war propaganda against the Soviet Union. The U.S.A. is retaliating against the decisions of the Ottawa Conference and the active support of Britain to Japanese imperialism in Manchuria, by taking a determined stand against cancelling British war debts. There is a division in the ruling class breathing war against the U.S.A. There is no such division in the *hostility to the Soviet Union.* The whole of the ruling class and the capitalist Press is carrying out the most shameful and lying campaign against the Soviet Union. The difficulties between the imperialist Powers, and particularly of British imperialism, are creating bigger efforts than ever before to destroy the Soviet Union. The struggle over war debts with the U.S.A. will strengthen the opposition of the Irish

republicans to British imperialism and draw them closer to the U.S.A. British imperialism is increasing its brutal oppression in India and is striving to recoup itself from the payment of war debts by forcing greater tribute from the poverty and misery of the Indian masses. This places a tremendous responsibility on the British Party to organise the struggle of the British workers in unity with the colonial peoples (particularly in India and Ireland) in the common fight against British imperialism, and for the release of the Meerut prisoners.

Everything points to the increasing preparations for a new world war, and more brutal suppression of the colonial peoples. In Britain, the speech of MacDonald declaring that two million of the unemployed were just "scrap" and the declared intention to enforce compulsory labour in payment for relief and the militarisation of young unemployed workers, indicates that the further attack on unemployed benefits and social services is only the first stage in the new offensive. The agreement between the textile employers and reformist union leaders to enforce the more loom system, the demand for 10 per cent. wage-cut for railway workers—all indicate *that gigantic class battles are looming ahead in Britain.*

The reformist leaders of the Labour Party and trade unions sense the rising discontent of the workers. Lansbury quite shamelessly makes brave speeches against the Means Test, the reformist leaders of the railway trade unions (Cramp, Dobbie, Bromley) talk of drastic action against wage-cuts. The General Council of the T.U.C. propose workers' delegations from the provinces to converge on London early in the New Year, to join in a huge demonstration of London workers in Hyde Park, which will send a deputation to present the "case" for the unemployed before the Bar of the House of Commons. The I.L.P. talks of "drastic revolutionary measures" to achieve Socialism, whilst at the same time disorganising the mass struggles of the workers. The reformists are making desperate efforts to take control of the increasing spirit of revolt to divert it into safe channels and prevent the rising mass struggle. *Herein lies the big danger for the Party unless in its revolutionary mass work it clearly exposes the dangerous rôle of reformism.*

This situation places tremendous responsibilities upon the British Party. The resolutions of the XII Congress are simple and clear, and deal concisely with the tasks confronting the Party in order to win the majority of the workers for mass struggle for partial demands, and its development into political struggle —into conscious revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of capitalism :

(1) Against the capitalist offensive led by the National Government and actively supported by the policy of the reformist trade union leaders on the wages of the workers, and unemployment and health insurance benefits, provision of work schemes for the unemployed, the Means Test, rationalisation, against any restriction on existing social services, high prices through tariffs and inflation, for freedom of strike, and against all anti-Labour legislation now being used to try and smash the increasing militant resistance of the workers.

(2) Against the National Government's war preparations, and its active co-operation with other imperialist Powers, for armed intervention against the Soviet Union, and particularly its policy of supporting and encouraging the anti-Soviet aims of the Japanese and French imperialists ; mass mobilisations against the breaking of the trade agreement with the Soviet Union, which puts tens of thousands of workers out of employment, and signals the alarm to the further concrete steps being organised for armed intervention against the Soviet Union. To systematically expose, especially in the factories and trade unions, the active support of the war policy of the National Government by the reformist leaders under the cover of pacifist phrases, and even verbal defence of the Soviet Union.

(3) For the withdrawal of all armed forces from the colonial countries, for the full independence of the colonies, with the right of separation from the British Empire.

The important question now is to end at once and for all the old practice of accepting good resolutions on paper, but not carrying them out in practice. Already steps are being taken to ensure that the resolutions of the XII Congress enter into the life and work of every Party member, and are concretised in the districts, locals and factory cells, to meet the actual situation in each industry, town and village, factory and trade unions branch. In this way, the Party will enter into close contact with the masses, will lead the daily struggles of the workers and in the course of its mass work destroy the influence of the reformist leaders and win over the workers in the reformist organisations to build a mass Party rooted in the factories to lead the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of capitalism and establish a free Socialist Britain.

THE ADOPTION OF A FIGHTING TACTICAL LINE

By A. Martynov

THE XIIth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. announced that "the end of relative capitalist stabilisation has come," that "at the present moment the transition to a new round of revolutions and wars is taking place."

From this estimate of the situation, the XIIth Plenum drew the following conclusions :

"The international situation in general sharply raises the problem of solving the main task . . . . at the present time, i.e., of preparing the working-class and the exploited masses, in the course of the economic and political struggle, for the impending fight for power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Precisely because little time remains before the revolutionary crisis matures, it is necessary, without losing a moment, to *intensify and accelerate* our Bolshevik mass work to win over the majority of the working-class, to heighten the revolutionary activity of the working-class."

The winning over of the majority of the working-class (not in the formal, parliamentary sense, but in the Leninist sense of the term, in the sense of winning over the decisive strata of the proletariat for the struggle under our leadership) and the establishment of the hegemony of the proletariat over wide circles of the toiling masses—these are the two fundamental strategic tasks which we have to fulfil in preparing the workers for the forthcoming fights for the dictatorship of the proletariat. But these are *strategic* tasks, which have always faced the Communist Parties of capitalist countries, and will continue to face them as long as their struggle lasts. The XIIth Plenum was faced with the question of finding the *fundamental tactical link* which we must seize immediately, under the present conditions of the relative stabilisation of capitalism, to *rapidly* drag forward the whole chain, so as to *strengthen and accelerate* the mass work of winning over the majority of the working-class, so as to *accelerate* the preparation of the proletariat for the decisive fights.

Comrade Stalin stated that our tactics change within the framework of one and the same strategic plan "according to the ebb and flow of revolution, the rise or the fall of the revolutionary wave, but always remain as a portion of strategy subordinated to it and helping it." What should be our tactics in the period of the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism and the transition to a new cycle of revolutions and wars, in order to "help" in the best and most rapid manner, our strategic tasks—the winning over of the majority of the working-class, and the attraction of the broad strata of toilers and the exploited masses to the side of the fighting proletariat? This question was raised at the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. And the Plenum solved it with the greatest clarity and precision, marking out a new and concrete tactical line for the sections of the Comintern (*not new in a theoretical sense, but in a practical sense*), corresponding to the new international situation.

To properly estimate the tactical change indicated by the XII Plenum, we must clearly realise the *long and extremely difficult path* which led and prepared our Communist Parties in capitalist countries for it, and which enables the Comintern to realise it now, with the greatest chances of success.

What should be the tactics of Bolsheviks in conditions of growing revolutionary mass upsurge, but not yet a revolutionary situation ? Lenin taught us this in the epoch of the first Russian revolution. In November, 1904, on the eve of the 1905 revolution, Lenin gave a picture of the growing revolutionary upsurge in his well-known article "The Zemsky Campaign and the Plans of Iskra," and immediately continued as follows :

"*Therefore*" (I emphasise this word.—A.M.) "it would be very unwise for some people to get the idea again of shouting for an immediate storm," etc.

We see that it is precisely when there is a growing revolutionary mass upsurge, but when there is not yet a revolutionary situation, that it is unwise to shout prematurely about an immediate storming of the position. But how should we prepare to storm—in a Bolshevik manner ? Lenin replied to this question in the same article, putting forward important tactical principles. Under conditions of a revolutionary upsurge, said Lenin, it is far better to *concentrate* our demonstrations not on the meetings of the oppositional liberals, where we can state our demands to them and criticise their half-hearted tactics (although we do not abandon this method) but at the police stations and jails, because *a mass onslaught* on our real enemy—the Tsarist Government —is the best method of influencing our unreliable and conditional allies—the liberals.

"It is not ' negotiations ' which are needed here, but an actual preparation of forces. It is not pressure on the local authorities but pressure on the Government and its agents. . . . If we have any force, then it should be opposed to the force of the cossacks and the police . . . and if the Russian proletariat is destined once more to bring pressure to bear on the tactics of the liberals, you may assume that they will bring this influence to bear by a mass onslaught on the police."

Thus, under conditions of revolutionary upsurge, the *chief thing* is no longer propaganda, propagandist criticism and agitation, although *they are always necessary*, but the organisation of the *onslaught of the*

masses in frequent mass fights, and the leadership of them. In the conditions of revolutionary upsurge, by concentrating our work on the organisation of mass fights, we shall better and more rapidly attract allies than we have been able to do by propaganda and agitation. Lenin afterwards repeated this idea on many occasions. In "Left Wing Communism" he wrote :

"As long as the question was, and still is one of gaining the vanguard of the proletariat for Communism, just so long and so far will *propaganda* take the first place. . . . But when the question is one of the practical activities of the masses, of the disposition of armies numbering millions and of the distribution of *all* the class forces of a given society for the last and decisive fight, the mere repetition of the truths of ' pure ' Communism will avail nothing. Here one must count by millions and tens of millions, not by thousands, as, after all, the propagandist does, the member of a small group that never yet led the masses. Here we must ask not only whether the vanguard of the revolutionary class has been convinced, but also whether the historically active forces of *all* classes of a given society have been properly distributed so that the final battle may not be premature."

How did Lenin *concretely* visualise the matter of influencing allies by mass pressure on the class enemy, under conditions when a revolutionary crisis was approaching, but did not yet exist ? He replied to this in the pre-war period, during the second revolutionary upsurge in Russia in 1912-13. In this case, as in 1904, Lenin, in July, 1912, warned against premature shouts about storming the position :

"While supporting and extending the onslaught of the masses, we must attentively take note of the experience of 1905, and while explaining the necessity and inevitability of a revolt, we must warn and restrain from premature attempts of such a nature."

In the same place, Lenin again spoke of the onward surge of the masses, but he wrote what he understood by "supporting and extending the mass onslaught" as a preparation for the decisive struggles ; somewhat later, in January, 1913.

"The workers are directing all their attention to supporting, strengthening, developing and consolidating the spontaneous revolutionary strike *consciously*, as preparations for the revolt of the peasants and the soldiers. If strikes exhaust the workers, they should be given a breathing space, allowing one section to rest while sections which have already rested, or 'fresh' forces, will come into the struggle. We must make strikes shorter. . . . We must sometimes replace strikes by demonstrations, but the chief thing is for the strikes, meetings and demonstrations to take place continually, so that all the peasants and all the soldiers will know of the stubborn struggle of the workers, so that the villages, even the most backward ones, will see that the towns are in a ferment, that their 'own' have risen, etc."

Thus, under the conditions of a revolutionary upsurge, the organisation of *continual* mass activity of the proletariat, the *inter-weaving* of partial *economic and political* fights is the best means of drawing the backward reserves up to the proletarian vanguard, the best method of winning over the majority of the working-class, and establishing its hegemony over the broad toiling masses.

The programme of the Comintern is in complete conformity with this, when it speaks of our tactical line at a time of revolutionary upsurge. It sets the task before our Parties of "the organisation of mass activity to which must be *subordinated* all branches of Party agitation and propaganda, including that in Parliament." Here it should be mentioned that the programme of the Comintern speaks of the "*subordination of all branches* of agitation and propaganda, to the organisation of mass activity," to such a level of the revolutionary upsurge at a time when the task of "leading the masses to a direct attack on the bourgeois state" already arises, when it is already necessary to carry on "propaganda of ever-sharpening transition slogans." Evidently, under conditions when "little time remains before the maturing of a revolutionary crisis," but there is not yet a revolutionary situation, when we are not yet faced with the direct task of a frontal attack on the bourgeois state, we must, while developing and organising economic and political fights, only take the line, but a firm line, of subordinating *all* our propaganda and agitation to this.

The tactical principle of transferring the centre of activity from propaganda and agitation to the independent organisation of class fights had to be, and was proclaimed by the Comintern from the very commencement of the third post-war period, when the situation was characterised by the following words of Comrade Stalin at the XV Congress of the C.P.S.U. :

"Out of partial stabilisation there will arise an increased crisis of capitalism, and this growing crisis will break down stabilisation."

But this tactical position was taken from *Russian experience* and reflected the experience of Russia, and although it was experience of international importance (experience which must be repeated on an international scale with historic inevitability), nevertheless the tactical line based on this experience was realised very slowly, and with great difficulty, by the Communist Parties in Western Europe and the U.S.A. The causes of the difficulties of translating this tactical line from the "language of Russia" into "West European and North American languages" consist in the fact that the operation of this tactical line in highly developed industrial countries en-

counters *additional difficulties* in practice, which did not exist, or but slightly manifested themselves, in economically backward Russia.

Lenin repeatedly stated that "compared with the advanced countries, it was easier for the Russians to *begin* the great proletarian revolution," although it will be "more difficult to continue it." (Lenin, "The Third International and Its Place in History.") In Germany and other advanced capitalist countries it is harder to begin it than in Russia, because, as Lenin expressed it, in Germany imperialism "is unfortunately forged of better steel, and therefore cannot be shattered by the efforts of a chicken" (Lenin, "Left Wing Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Habits"). We point out here the two chief additional difficulties which arise from the greater strength of the bourgeois system in these countries compared with the backward Russia of the period prior to the October Revolution.

Firstly, in Western Europe and the U.S.A. the bourgeoisie are much better organised than was the case with the bourgeoisie in backward Russia. In these countries the bourgeoisie have succeeded in including firmly in *their own* organisation considerable sections of the working-class, through the agency of the degenerate social-democratic party and the reformist trade unions, based on a labour aristocracy, bribed by imperialism.

"In the West," said Lenin, "the Mensheviks have acquired a much firmer footing in the trade unions. There a much wider strata of labour aristocracy, those *professional, narrow-minded, selfish, brutal, jealous, petty-bourgeois elements* has cropped up, *imperialistically inclined, and bribed and corrupted by imperialism.*" (Lenin, "Left-Wing Communism.")

Therefore it is much more difficult in such a country to develop and organise proletarian revolutionary elements, because the development and organisation of proletarian revolutionary elements there requires much more careful preparation than was necessary in Russia.

"The better the organisation of the proletariat in capitalist countries, the more definitely does history require from us, and the greater thoroughness must we show in winning over the majority of the working-class." (Lenin, Report on the Tactics of the C.P. of Russia at the III Congress of the Comintern.)

In order to unleash and lead the class fights of the proletariat in these countries, it is necessary to win over the majority of the *organised* workers, and for this purpose we must penetrate into the chief stronghold of social-democracy—into the reformist trade unions, establishing a united front of struggle of the Communist workers, the workers in the reformist trade unions, and the unorganised workers. But it is not easy for Communists to carry out the tactic of the united front from below, to work, and to work successfully, in the stronghold of social-democracy—in the reformist trade unions. In these unions Communists are slandered and persecuted in every way. In this connection Lenin wrote :

"It is necessary to be able to withstand all this, to go the whole length if need be, to resort to strategy and adroitness, illegal proceedings, reticence and subterfuge, to anything in order to penetrate into the trade unions, remain in them, and carry on Communist work inside them at any cost." (Lenin, "Left-Wing Communism.")

In view of the difficulties of work in the reformist trade unions, and of establishing the united front from below with the social-democratic workers, the comrades in the Communist Parties of capitalist countries have too often dropped into "left" sectarian passivity, using every kind of "left" excuse to avoid the fulfilment of these tasks ; or else, when they undertook this business, they sometimes made Right opportunist mistakes, capitulating to trade union legality, and especially to the cunning manoeuvres of the social-democrats. In general, the Communist Parties of capitalist countries, *taking the line of least resistance*, continued to *concentrate* their work on propaganda and agitation, when the conditions of the period (the shattering of the partial stabilisation of capitalism) already demanded that the centre of the work should be transferred to the organisation of class struggles. As a result, the Communist Parties, which had great successes in the sphere of propaganda and agitation, and which correspondingly *extended their political influence continually among the proletarian masses*, did not consolidate this influence organisationally, because it is easiest to consolidate our influence among the masses in the process of class fights, and, above all, in economic fights, while it was precisely in this sphere that the successes of the Communist Party were most insignificant ; especially if we remember the objective conditions which became very favourable to the penetration of Communism with the beginning of the world economic crisis. The matter of destroying the mass influence of social-democracy suffered greatly from this neglect of the organisation of class fights. Social-democracy, by its innumerable treacheries, provided the most valuable material to be used against itself. But no agitational exposures, and none of the hard words which the Communists used so freely, could replace the rapid and fundamental exposure which could have been achieved in the process of the class struggle when the masses, in the experience of their struggle, become convinced of the vile rôle played by the social-democrats.

It required a number of years of the deepest economic crisis for the social-democratic barrier which separated the Communists from the masses in capitalist countries, and prevented the development of class struggles, to be so shattered that the Communist Parties could at length move forward in this sphere.

The second additional difficulty, which affects the Communist Parties in leading capitalist countries, is the difficulty in the matter of winning the hegemony of the proletariat over the peasant movement. In backward Russia we had a "combination of proletarian revolution with peasant war," a combination which Marx awaited so impatiently and so vainly for in Germany. In the Western European countries, in the epoch of their bourgeois revolutions, the bourgeoisie, and not the proletariat, had the hegemony over the peasants. As the result, the bourgeoisie in those countries strengthened their influence in the villages to a much greater extent than in Russia, and this has found expression in the fact that in the West European capitalist countries, as distinguished from Russia before the revolution, there are strong mass peasant organisations, the leadership of which is entirely in the hands of big landowners and agrarian capitalists connected with finance capital. And this barrier between the proletariat and the peasants is only beginning to break down now, in capitalist countries, owing to the long and intensifying agrarian crisis.

It is sufficient to recall, even but cursorily, the number of times the leadership of the Comintern has raised, on the basis of Russian experience, the question of passing from propaganda and agitation to the organisation of class fights, and if we contrast this to the practice of West European and North American Communist Parties, it will convince us how difficult it was for this tactical line to make headway in these Parties.

At the very beginning of the third post-war period, in February, 1928, the slogan of "class against class" was put forward at the IX Plenum of the E.C.C.I. At this IX Plenum this slogan was launched :

"Every strike must be the arena of struggle for the leadership between the Communists and the reformists. Therefore, the line of conduct of Communists must be that of assuring Communist leadership in strikes."

Following this, the IV Congress of the R.I.L.U. issued as its central slogan the "Independent leadership of economic struggles."

After the VI Congress of the Comintern and the liquidation of Brandlerism and conciliation to it, the C.P.G. made the first successful steps in this direction, in a number of big strikes. In the metal workers' strike in the Ruhr (213,000 strikers), in the Munich-Gladbach strike of textile workers (45,000 strikers), in the strike of the shipyard workers (60,000 strikers), and in the Hamburg strike of port workers, the Communists were able to make a breach in the reformist monopoly of the leadership of economic strikes for the first time, and take part in this *in addition* to the reformists.

Simultaneously, the Polish comrades even won the predominating position in the leadership of the strike of 100,000 workers at the Lodz textile factories. These first successes in 1928 were very promising, especially as the C.P.G. was able, soon afterwards, in May, 1929, to organise a tremendous demonstration in Berlin, accompanied by barricade fighting in Wedding and Neukoln.

On the basis of these successes, Comrade Manuilsky began his report at the X Plenum of the E.C.C.I. in July, 1929, with the following words :

"The central axis of this report will be the question of the Communist Parties winning the *leading rôle* in the labour movement. This question of the winning of the leadership of the workers' movement is, at present, the beginning of all beginnings, from which we must start when determining all the other tasks of the Communist Parties."

At the X Plenum, Comrade Piatnitsky stated that "we are moving towards a powerful upsurge of the workers' movement," and emphasised that "only by combining a correct policy with an effective organisation will the sections of the Comintern be able to carry out the tasks facing them." Criticising the organisational backwardness of the Parties and indicating how to eliminate it, he reminded the Plenum of the rôle played by our organisational separation from the masses ; that in 1923 in Germany, though there was a revolutionary situation, there were no revolutionary mass actions.

The path was correctly indicated. The first steps were taken. And how did matters go later ?

In 1929 the German Communist Party was able to completely obtain the leadership in two very stubborn strikes—the strike of the Berlin pipe fitters and the Hennigsdorf steel smelters' strike—but both these strikes embraced a much smaller number of workers then the above-mentioned German strikes in 1928. The C.P.G. was unable to develop or lead more strikes that year. This is explained, to a considerable extent, by the fact that the social-democrats and the reformist trade unions came out in open opposition to strikes and as open strike-breakers, while the C.P.G. was not sufficiently connected with the masses, and had not sufficiently strengthened its position in the reformist trade unions to overcome their resistance. In this same year, 1929, the Czecho-Slovakian Communist Party prepared and led two strikes—the textile workers in Reichenberg, and the agricultural workers, but in both these strikes it suffered a heavy defeat, owing to the "left" mistakes of the leaders of the Party at that time, and this led to a crisis in the revolutionary trade union movement of Czecho-Slovakia, and a Party crisis.

In 1930 the XVI Congress of the C.P.S.U. and then the V Congress of the R.I.L.U. took place, under conditions of world economic crisis. At the XVI Congress of the C.P.S.U. the Russian delegation of the E.C.C.I. raised once more, with the greatest clearness and distinctness, the question of the

necessity of transferring the centre of the work of the Comintern to the organisation of class fights. But in contradistinction to the X Plenum of the E.C.C.I., hi question was raised *not in connection with successes, but with failures* in the sphere of the leadership of strikes. The comrade who reported for the Russian delegation in the E.C.C.I.* stated in his concluding remarks :

"Facts show that in a number of countries, our Parties have learned to organise mass political actions and demonstrations of the workers not at all badly. . . . However, in the leadership of class battles, beginning with economic strikes, the Communist Parties successes are still insignificant. Yet, the organisation of class battles under the leadership of the Communist Parties is the fundamental task of the present period. Whereas previously the work of the Communist Parties amounted in the main to *agitation and propaganda*, to-day the centre of gravity lies in the *organisation of class battles* under Communist leadership. Only on this basis, on the basis of the Bolshevik organisation of strike struggle, and other forms of class battle against advancing capitalism can and must the Communist Parties genuinely win prestige and working-class confidence in their leadership of the whole revolutionary struggle, of the proletariat. *From this angle the successes of the Comintern sections are still insignificant* (italics mine) and it is precisely in this sphere of activity that the Communist Parties must bring about a decisive change."

At the XVI Congress of the C.P.S.U. Comrade Manuilsky showed, in great detail, that the chief shortcoming of the sections of the Comintern consists in their organisational backwardness and their underestimation of the organisational rôle of the Communist Parties, which is linked up with the "agitational and propagandist period of their development," out of which they are only now beginning to grow. He added that this does not imply that agitation and propaganda lose any of their importance.

Soon after this, the V Congress of the R.I.L.U. in setting out the further tactical steps in the matter of obtaining the independent leadership of the economic struggle and pointing out the great achievements in this sphere, at the same time showed that since the IV Congress of the R.I.L.U. the revolutionary trade union movement had "lost a number of positions in the old capitalist countries" during the past two years.

"(*a*) The membership of a number of revolutionary trade unions has fallen considerably (France, Czecho-Slovakia) ; (*b*) a number of revolutionary trade union organisations have been driven underground and lost ground among the masses (Yugo-Slavia, Roumania, etc.) ; (*c*) some of the sections and organisations affiliated to the R.I.L.U., though growing organisationally, have been lagging behind as regards not only the actual requirements of the movement, but also the increase of their political influence (Germany, China, Latin America)."

In analysing the big strikes which had taken place since the IV Congress of the R.I.L.U., the V Congress stated : (1) that in some cases strikes have broken out spontaneously, without our preparations, owing to our separation from the masses, (2) that in some cases when strikes were prepared by us, the reformists were able to wreck them because they approached the masses with concrete partial slogans, while Communists *merely agitated* for the conversion of the economic struggle into a political struggle, (3) that finally, in very many cases, the Communist organisations and the Red trade unions united with the demands of the reformists, formed unprincipled blocs, with them and lost their political individuality.

After the V Congress of the R.I.L.U. the German Communist Party carried on an energetic struggle against "Merkerism," this "left" attitude in the trade union movement which took the line that the masses of workers, organised in the reformist trade unions, who support social-democracy were identical with their leaders (the theory of "little Zoergiebels"), which made the tactic of the united front from below impossible. This struggle was largely instrumental in bringing about the two big successes of the German Communist Party in the leadership of the economic struggle. The Berlin metal workers' strike, which embraced 140,000 workers, took place, to a considerable extent, under the leadership of Communists, while the Ruhr miners' strike (December, 1930-January, 1931), which involved 60,000 workers was entirely under the leadership of the Communists, in the struggle against the reformists. But these two successes were the *last before the XII Plenum*. In 1931 the C.P.G. considerably weakened its work in the sphere of the trade union movement and economic struggle. The C.P.G. and the R.T.U.O. did not react, either to the crash of the Danat Bank or the emergency decrees of Bruning, and later Von Papen, by organising a strike movement.

At the end of 1930, and in the first half of 1931, wide and very successful work in the sphere of the economic struggle was carried on by the Communist Parties in Great Britain, U.S.A., Germany and Czecho-Slovakia only in the unemployed movement. During this period the Communist Parties were the monopolists in the leadership of the unemployed movement. However, even this work became somewhat weaker later.

A new and considerable change in the leadership of the economic struggle began in the middle of 1931 in Poland and Czecho-Slovakia and partly in other Communist Parties, and also recently in Germany. But this is connected with the end of the stabilisation of capitalism, which will be dealt with later.

* "The Developing Crisis of World Capitalism." Modern Books, Ltd.

Summing up, we may state that from the beginning of the third post-war period to the end of the relative stabilisation of capitalism, in spite of all the efforts of the Comintern, the successes of the Communist Parties in the matter of the obtaining the independent leadership of the economic struggle were extremely small compared with the tremendous tasks which face them.

The development of the revolutionary trade union movement, work in the reformist trade unions, penetration into the factories by forming factory cells in them—all these are necessary levers for the organisation of class struggles and especially economic struggles. And still facts quoted at the XII Plenum show that the work of reinforcing these levers, until very recently, lagged far behind the numerical growth of the Communist Parties, and that of their political influence. During the last sixteen months, the Parties in the Comintern (excluding the C.P.S.U.) increased by 400,000 members. The German Party increased by 150,000 members, i.e., it doubled its membership. The Czechish Party increased by 30,000 members, i.e., it also doubled its membership. There was an increase in the numbers of the Chinese, Polish, Austrian, Italian, Bulgarian, Belgian, British, Spanish and other Communist Parties. And what of the revolutionary trade union movement? The representative of the R.I.L.U. Comrade Losovsky, replied to this at the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. :

"The situation is that the number of members of the German Communist Party exceeds the number of members of the revolutionary trade unions" (although, of course, the reverse should be the case.—A.M.) "the Czech Communist Party is increasing more quickly than the Red trade unions, the C.P. of Great Britain is growing while the Minority Movement is declining, the great increase of the Polish Communist Party is not reflected in a corresponding growth of the R.T.U.O. . . . The only country where there is some ' co-ordination ' between the Party and the trade unions is France, where the Party is not growing—and the trade unions are now growing. But such a co-ordination hardly merits imitation."

At the Plenum Comrade Piatnitsky remarked that a similar disparity existed in the Communist Parties in capitalist countries between the growth of street cells and area groups, on the one hand, and the factory cells on the other.

"The decision to transfer the centre of gravity of the Party and trade union work to the factory, in most cases has remained on paper. . . . In the C.P. of Germany the local organisations without any cells and the street cells have increased tremendously, while the growth of the factory cells has lagged considerably behind the area groups and the street cells."

Comrade Piatnitsky even indicated an important fact confirmed by Comrade Losovsky, that a large number of members of Communist Parties in capitalist countries *do not wish to be members of trade unions, do not wish to work in the trade unions.* The Party census in Czecho-Slovakia showed that about 56 to 57 per cent. of the members were not members of trade unions, and in Germany about 40 per cent. of the Party members are not members of the trade unions or the R.T.U.O.

All this shows the extent to which the Communist Parties still bear the impress of the agitational and propagandist period, in spite of their considerable numerical increase and a still greater increase in their political influence (and the latter applies to the French Party, in spite of the stagnation of the membership).

* * *

During the last two years many people have asked, and still ask with astonishment, why the proletariat of Western Europe and the U.S.A. have not yet made a revolution in conditions of the most intense economic crisis in the history of the world. Those whose astonsihment drives them to ask this question, do not take the *additional difficulties* mentioned by Lenin into account, which stand in the path of the development and organisation of class fights in these countries, which did not affect backward Russia, or affected it to a much smaller degree. Those who ask this question do not remember how much better the bourgeoisie are organised, how much stronger is their main social bulwark—social-democracy and the reformist trade unions—in the chief capitalist countries, than the bourgeoisie and menshevism in Russia before the October Revolution.

But the mole of history is working precisely in the direction foretold by the Comintern. The VI Congress of the Comintern, in characterising the third period which was opening up, said :

"This period will inevitably lead, through the further development of the contradictions of capitalist stabilisation, to capitalist stabilisation becoming still more precarious and to the severe intensification of the general crisis of capitalism."

Four years later the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. was able to state that "the end of the relative stabilisation of capitalism has come."

The end of the stabilisation of capitalism means that "a tremendous *change* has taken place in the relationship of forces between the socialist and capitalist worlds," that the increasing economic decline, the growing economic crisis, on the basis of the general crisis of capitalism, has reached such an extent that it makes it very difficult to emerge in the so-called "normal" capitalist way of overcoming periodic crises, that this blind alley, in connection with the growing revolutionary upsurge, "drives the bourgeoisie to seek a violent solution of these antagonisms both within their own countries and on the international arena." The end of the stabilisation of

capitalism means that "a new imperialist war has become an immediate danger," that "preparations for intervention in the U.S.S.R. have entered a new phase," that "the threat of direct intervention hangs over the U.S.S.R."

The end of stabilisation means that "the further strengthening of political reaction and the fascisation of the State" is accompanied by "a contraction of the basis of bourgeois rule and manifestations of fissures and disintegration."

The end of stabilisation means that, on the basis of the increasing economic decline and the "sharp contraction of the material basis of reformism" which is connected with it, and the strong revolutionary mass upsurge, the "mass influence of the social-fascists has declined in almost all countries."

The last two points signify a decrease in the chief of the additional difficulties which hindered the development of class fights in the advanced capitalist countries. At the same time, the impoverishment of the masses, the plunder of the masses by the capitalists and by the bourgeois state, the police and fascist violence used against them, the menace of war which hangs over them, the danger of intervention in the Soviet Union—all this spreads the spirit of revolt among the masses. As the result, we see a rapid and general growth of the revolutionary upsurge at the present time with all the inequalities of revolutionary development usual for the epoch of imperialism.

To sum up, we have at present a revolutionary situation in China, revolution in Spain, "in the near future Japan may be in the situation of a revolutionary crisis," "Poland is approaching very closely to a revolutionary crisis." Germany is approximately in the same position. In a number of capitalist countries the mass movement is now taking the very forms which Lenin regarded as characteristic of a pre-revolutionary situation. Economic strikes for the elementary demands of the masses, under conditions when the bourgeoisie are throwing all the burdens of the deepest crisis arising from the capitalist system, on to their shoulders, are bringing them into conflict with the very foundations of the existence of capitalism, are assuming the character of revolutionary strikes. Economic strikes in some cases grow into general economic strikes in whole branches of industry, in other cases they become political strikes. Economic strikes become interwoven with political mass activity, with demonstrations and street fights. The revolutionary movement spreads from the town to the village. In certain capitalist countries the elements of the agrarian revolution, which broke out but recently in colonial countries, are growing.

All this is taking place *not only spontaneously*, as the opportunists claim, but accompanied by the *rapidly growing influence of the Communist Parties*. Under the conditions of the end of the stabilisation of capitalism, the sections of the Comintern have rapidly grown during the last year. The number of members has increased from 550,000 to 914,000, excluding the C.P.S.U. Their political influence has increased similarly or to an even greater extent, judging by parliamentary elections. Still more important is the fact that *their organisational rôle has at last begun to increase*, that in some Parties a *big change* has taken place during the last year, in the matter of getting hold of the leadership of the mass movement on the basis of a capable application of the tactic of the united front from below, that these Parties—above all, the Polish Party, which led 80 per cent. of the strikes in the first quarter of 1932, then the Czecho-Slovakian Party and the German Party, in the anti-fascist struggle—have begun to take successful action in the rôle of *leaders of the developing mass struggle*.

Thus, *the first big—though not decisive—breach has at last been made, and even that only in a few capitalist countries*. This connection with the whole new situation has enabled the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. to transfer the Parties in capitalist countries to a fighting tactical line, to place the *tactical task of developing and organising the interwoven economic and political fights, raising them under suitable conditions to the higher level of mass political strikes, subordinating our agitation and propaganda to this matter, and linking it up with the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat as an aim which is already close at hand*, before them with the greatest incisiveness and chance of success.

May we say that the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. marks a tactical change not only in words, but in deeds, taking into consideration that this new tactical line has been talked about so many times while practice, on the whole, has gone along in the old way ?

We may reply affirmatively to this question without the slightest hesitation, not only because the whole international situation has greatly changed, *for the first time* giving the Plenum grounds to speak of the end of the partial stabilisation of capitalism, but also because the XII Plenum itself differed in certain significant features from the previous Plenums of the third period.

Firstly, the new tactical line was not simply dictated and proclaimed by the leadership of the Comintern on the basis of the old rich revolutionary experience of the Russian Bolsheviks, correctly adapted to the present concrete conditions of various countries, and approved by the sections. A number of delegates from capitalist countries—from Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Germany and others, insistently demanded the tactical change, on the basis of their own new experience and from the successful application of the new tactics, pointing out that the *revolutionary* character of strikes had already become a widely spread fact, as in Russia in the epoch of the

first revolution; that the interweaving of economic strikes with political actions, and the growth of economic strikes into political strikes *with the active assistance of the Communist Parties* had also become a widely-spread phenomenon, and that, finally, the mass political strike is put forward at the present time not only as a desirable immediate aim, as was the case at the X Plenum of the E.C.C.I., but as something to which we were *directly led* by a number of general economic strikes, and a series of small political strikes.

Secondly, the question of the tactic of the united front from below, which is most closely connected with the whole of the new fighting tactical line, was likewise not treated in an abstract manner at the Plenum. The German and Czecho-Slovakian comrades, who took an active part in the discussion on this question, used arguments from their own rich experience and their weighty achievements in this sphere, although there had been some mistakes, which were realised before the Plenum, or at the Plenum. Therefore, the unanimous conclusions to which the discussion on this question led were very concrete and very instructive.

Thirdly, the question of the necessity of rapidly eliminating the habits of the agitational and propagandist period was also raised at the Plenum not only from above, by the leadership of the Comintern, as was previously the case. The delegates from various sections, realising that "little time remains before the maturing of the revolutionary crisis" and that it was necessary "without losing a minute, to *strengthen and accelerate* Bolshevik mass work for the winning over of the majority of the working-class, for heightening the revolutionary *activity* of the working masses," *raised the alarm* on the question of the organisational backwardness of their Parties. Comrade Urtado, the delegate of the Spanish Party (which, by the way, had increased to 17,000 members), said:

"The Party was incapable of becoming the real organiser of the revolution. On the contrary, in the Party there was and still exists the old conception which regards the Party as an agitational and propagandist organisation, carrying on definite campaigns, but unable to become an organisation which would serve as a basis for the further development of fights. As the result of this conception, the Party could not develop wide initiative and participation in partial economic and political fights, and could not convert these concrete partial fights into general fights on a large scale."

Comrade Thälmann said:

"The chief thing is to convert the German Party into a real militant Party capable of fighting. In some places the tendencies which exist, nourished by the bourgeoisie and their lackeys, to carry on only agitation and propaganda and parliamentary elections must be eliminated. We must pass from agitation and propaganda to the real unleashing of mass actions and fights. The mass strike and the political general strike is our main weapon of struggle at the present stage."

The French delegation at the Plenum made the following decision in commission:

"In this situation, in order that the French C.P. can stand at the head of the masses, lead them and organise them, it must concentrate its attention on the problem of partial economic and political demands, so as to win the confidence of the masses, draw them into the struggle and progressively raise these partial fights to the level of big revolutionary battles. *This requires a decisive change in the work of the unitary trade unions, in the work of the parliamentary fractions, and the municipal fractions and in the work of the mass organisations under the influence of the Party. Up to the present, "Humanité" and the provincial Press have been chiefly weapons of agitation. They, and first of all "Humanité," must become the organisers of the mass movement.*"

Fourthly, the *organisational* decisions adopted at the Plenum testify to the accelerated preparations for the struggle in the intense conditions, when the situation rapidly changes. For example, the Plenum decided very definitely against *super-centralism*. This decision does not signify a course to the weakening of strict Party discipline. On the contrary, in connection with the work of the German oppositional group of Comrade Neumann, the Plenum emphasised the necessity of maintaining iron discipline in the Parties, *especially at the present moment*, and not shaking the authority of the leaders. The idea behind this decision consists in the necessity of strengthening and encouraging the *revolutionary initiative* of all the Party organisations, right down to the lowest cell, in fighting conditions, when the situation rapidly changes and when it is frequently impossible to delay a responsible decision until it is endorsed with the Party centre or the E.C.C.I.

Fifthly, the new fighting tactical line, as was shown in our journal, in the leading article of No. 17/18 of the "Communist International," dealing with the Plenum, was the keynote of the theses and the resolutions of the Plenum, which were carefully discussed by all the delegations, while in previous Plenum this line was not given in a developed form, although the leaders of the Comintern insistently spoke of it.

The XII Plenum set out a firm tactical line. Does this mean that the work of all our sections will proceed smoothly along the new path? Not at all. Such a thing could not be. Not only are we learning in the struggle, but our enemies have learned a great deal, and are able to manoeuvre quite successfully. The speaker from the Polish section, Comrade Lensky, pointed out in his report that in spite of the biggest successes of the Polish Communist Party and in spite of the growing stubbornness of the workers in

strikes, the proportion of strikes lost in the first half of the present year had increased, and that in the general protest strike of March 16, the P.P.S. succeeded in seizing the initiative from the Communists, and declaring the strike, although they had not prepared it. In Czecho-Slovakia, after the well-conducted strike of the miners in Brüx, we had the failure at Kladno. Then again, not so long ago, we obtained success once again with the metal workers. Partial failures will be inevitable in the future. But the fact that the leading elements of the Communist Parties, judging by all the evidence, have learned and realised the *possibility, the necessity and the urgency of the tactical change*, is the first guarantee that they will soon make their way along the new path, or rather the old "Russian path." In this respect, the following fact is instructive. At the XII Plenum it was noted that the German C.P. had successfully carried out the campaign of anti-fascist self-defence on the basis of the tactic of the united front, and, as a result, had obtained a big success in the Reichstag elections. When the Party called for a general strike on July 20, at the time of the fascist coup in Prussia, the workers did not respond to this call, chiefly because the C.P.G. for a long time had weakened its work for the organisation of strikes for partial economic demands. Our German comrades fully realised this mistake, and resolved to reorganise their work in this sphere. The results can already be seen. During the last month alone, there have been already 400 strikes in Germany, and when this article had already been written, we received the news of the Berlin strike of tramway workers under the leadership of the R.T.U.O.

In 1910 Lenin wrote in the article "Two Worlds":

"The irony of history has led to the fact that the ruling classes in Germany, who formed the strongest Government in the second half of the nineteenth century, consolidating the conditions for the most rapid capitalist progress and the conditions for the most stable constitutional legality, are now very obviously arriving at a situation when this legality, *their* legality, has to be broken—for the sake of the rule of the bourgeoisie. . . . The time is now approaching when this half-century of German history must change into a new zone, in view of objective causes. The epoch of the utilisation of the legality created by the bourgeoisie is *replaced* by the epoch of tremendous revolutionary fights, and these fights *in essence* will destroy *all* bourgeois legality, *the whole* bourgeois system, but in *form* they must commence (and are commencing) with the confused efforts of the bourgeoisie to get rid of this legality, created by themselves, which has now become unbearable for them. . . . The socialist proletariat will not forget for a moment that ahead of them lies inevitably a revolutionary mass struggle, which breaks down all the legality of bourgeois society, which is doomed to destruction. . . . This is the peculiarity of the pre-revolutionary situation in modern Germany." (Lenin, Vol. XIV).

These remarkable words of Lenin had the sense of a big historic perspective for Germany. They can now be applied to the fullest extent to modern Germany, and not to Germany alone, in the sense of the nearest and most immediate perspectives. In reality, have not the German bourgeoisie who created *their own* constitutional legality (the Weimar constitution!) which helped them and their main social bulwark—social-democracy—so much in the stabilisation of German capitalism, been compelled to break *their own* legality for the sake of preserving their rule, and make confused efforts to get rid of it, by establishing one of the forms of fascist dictatorship, headed by the Papen-Schleicher Government? Is it not a fact that not only in Germany at the present time, but throughout the capitalist world there is taking place a "further strengthening of political reaction and the fascisation of the State"? Is it not a fact that this is accompanied everywhere not by the consolidation of the bourgeois state but by "the contraction of the basis of bourgeois rule, and the appearance of fissures and disintegration in it"? Is it not a fact that the present attack of fascism, which breaks constitutional legality is a prologue to the revolutionary mass struggle of the proletariat, which will destroy all the legality of bourgeois society which is doomed to destruction? Is it not a fact that the proletariat, led by the Communist Parties, are already passing from defence to a counter-attack against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and reaction, against approaching imperialist war and intervention in the Soviet Union?

The proletariat of the various capitalist countries, under the leadership of the sections of the Comintern, are making their way along the Russian path, but now *on the basis of their own experience*. This means that whereas the first cycle of wars and revolutions gave the Russian October to the world, the rapidly approaching second cycle of revolutions and wars will present it with the German October, the Polish October and then the world October.

UNLEASH THE PROLETARIAN REBELLION!

THÄLMANN

Organise the Counter-Offensive of the Proletariat!

Comrades, the importance of the developments in Germany, the burning interest felt for Germany, has already found its expression in the fact that the debate on this question has occupied the largest amount of space, in the discussion at the XII Plenum. I do not want to repeat what has been said already about the developments in Germany but only to deal first and foremost with the latest developments in the German situation.

First of all, a few words about the organisational growth of the Communist Party of Germany in connection with some other Parties. Despite the strong fluctuation which is present, we are able to record a gigantic organisational growth of our Party; we can likewise record a favourable upward development in the Czecho-Slovakian Party accompanied by a simultaneous extension of its mass basis. But here we must say that the numerical growth of a party is not always a sign of its further penetration into the masses, or of its revolutionary consolidation among the proletariat.

We have seen, for example, in the results of the Prussian elections of April 24, that there were the beginnings of an isolation of the Party from the masses. This occasioned us to draw certain practical conclusions. During the three months which elapsed from April 24, till July 31, we won about 1,000,000 new votes, and by the use of special methods in the employment of the policy of the united front from below, by the campaign of the anti-Fascist Direct Action, we have won over to our side some class-conscious elements from Social-Democracy, together with active sections of the "Iron Front," which had still been regarded hitherto among the Social-Democratic and *Reichsbanner* workers as a militant anti-Fascist organisation. We can say: that the anti-Fascist Direct Action represented a great and swift success.

But when we set over against the successes of the German Party, the successes which can be recorded, for example, by the Polish and Czecho-Slovakian Parties in strike struggles, we must admit that both these Parties, in particular our Polish brother Party, have far excelled the German Party in the fulfilment of their tasks. The successes of the Polish Party, described here with interesting examples by Comrade Lensky,* were gained in the face of very great and serious difficulties. These successes of our illegal Polish brother Party, must be an incentive and serve as a special example, first and foremost to the German Party, but for all other Parties too, to learn from the Polish Party in this respect.

It is quite clear to us that the developments of the immediate future in Germany will bring with them, not only a deepening of the whole crisis, but also a rapid accentuation of class differences and a tremendous sharpening of the class struggle.

We must observe the new, the dialectic element in the process of these developments, because the Party is confronted perpetually, one could say hourly, with fresh tasks. The conditions of the development of Fascism are now different from what they were at the beginning of the period of capitalist stabilisation. With the ravages inflicted on economy, the accentuation of the crisis in the country, the foundations of Fascist dictatorship and, in connection with this, the continued strivings and efforts to consolidate it, are at the same time rendered more difficult. Fascism will encounter more and more difficulties, and more and more resistance, through the counter-offensive of the class front of the proletariat. We can state here, despite the fact that we must not for a moment underestimate the aggressiveness of Fascism, that the latter already bears within itself, strong elements of disintegration. Fascism is not only a product of putrefying capitalism, but also an expression of the accentuated class struggle of the bourgeoisie, against the proletariat, and, in particular against the revolutionary mass movement, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Germany. It is of the utmost importance to make full use of all the inner differences which may come to light within the camp of the bourgeoisie and its satellites, and strengthen the power of resistance of the proletariat, and the toiling masses. We must not, of course, treat the question in a mechanical and automatic way, as though Fascism would disappear from the picture of its own accord. Neither will it automatically retrogress in its development or collapse through the downfall of economy in connection with the accentuation of the world economic crisis; in this, the Communist Party represents the most decisive revolutionary factor on which the further development of Fascism, in the main, depends. On the basis of the experience gained during the first years of the development of Italian Fascism, various comrades, and in particular Comrade Ercoli, have here emphasised the

*See No. 7/18.

great differences which must be kept in view, in comparing the present time with that period, in order to analyse correctly the character and development of Fascism. Fascism, after its seizure of power in Italy, was given more favourable conditions for consolidating its power (owing to the relative stabilisation which then set in) than German Fascism has to-day, at a time when capitalist stabilisation has come to an end. In addition to this, there is the fact, which has hitherto not been sufficiently emphasised, that our Parties have to-day become more mature, that they have grown, and now represent other factors than they represented at that time, during Fascism's period of development, at the beginning of capitalist stabilisation.

This is a fact of no small importance, since the bourgeoisie has to reckon with the Communist Party, every day and every hour. In the problems which now present themselves in Germany for example, the revolutionary ability of the Communist Party to mobilise and activise the masses plays a decisive part. From the strength and maturity of the Party proceeds the heavy revolutionary tasks allotted the Communist Party, as they have been formulated here at the XII Plenum. This severe assignment of tasks, at the same time, renders it easier for the German delegation to understand the criticism, to which our work has been subjected at the XII Plenum.

Bolshevik criticism of the work of the Communist Party of Germany can only be welcomed. This criticism helps us a very great deal; it has an educative effect, and gives us occasion to efface our weaknesses and the defects in the Party in conjunction with the Comintern. The comradely criticism to which the Russian Delegation have subjected the German Party, in particular in connection with July 20, is not only recognised by us in its entirety as correct and politically necessary, but it also obliges us to draw practical conclusions from it, for our further revolutionary work. When our Russian friends draw our especial attention — as, for example, Comrade Manuilsky has done — to the fact that fatalistic opinions are to be met with among individual members of our Party — opinions which make preliminary assumption that the victory of Fascism is inevitable and reconcile themselves to some extent also with the historical inevitability of a war—we must own that this criticism fits the facts, and has a very serious meaning. If, however, Fascism's tempo of growth in Germany has hitherto been more rapid than the forward march of revolution, that is not a clue to the further course of development in Germany. Let me say that the course of development in Germany can change very quickly.

German Fascism to-day is already being hemmed in and menaced by the resistance and by the onslaughts of the revolutionary proletariat under the leadership of the Communist Party, though, of course, not yet to such an extent that its position is likely to collapse to-morrow or the next day. We have here to do with a wily and subtle class antagonist. We have, here, to do with a bourgeoisie which carries out its attacks against the working masses and against the proletariat in a manner suited to the changing situation — aggressive, bold, swift and surprising. The interesting happenings accompanying the dissolution of the *Reichstag*, the terrorist sentences which have been passed and the new emergency decrees which have been issued, afford us examples of the methods with which the Papen-Schleicher Government is attempting to carry through its plans of starvation and Fascist offensive against the toiling masses. The Government does not shrink from the most brutally aggressive action, and shows the most ruthless determination to attain a higher development of Fascist dictatorship.

We must be prepared for more surprises in Germany such as that of July 20. Despite the fact that our Party is capable of manœuvring, it still reacts far too slowly to all events. July 20 especially showed up our main weaknesses in a very sharp light. Such rapid and surprising changes of situation show us the necessity of creating within the Party, from top to bottom, such bases, such political prerequisites, as may render it possible to attain the highest revolutionary development and the rapid concrete application of the general line of the Party, to suit a given situation. We must answer the surprise blows of the class enemy with just the same quickness and determination, to force the bourgeoisie to beat a retreat. The most important problem for us is the task now set us at the XII Plenum, namely, to lead the masses on to the various forms of revolutionary class struggle, from partial struggles right up to the political mass strike, and the general strike in various districts.

In this correct assignment of tasks from the centre, the main point is to create the prerequisites for these struggles and actions not only in our Party and in the revolutionary organisations, but also among the great masses of the population. If the struggles in Germany remain isolated from the great masses of the people, if they do not have a profound and stimulating mass character, then the basic foundations of bourgeois class domination will not be shaken to their roots and the further development of Fascist dictatorship, will not so easily be brought to a standstill

or set back. On the basis of the criticism to which the German Party has been subjected here, we must try to locate the causes by which our weaknesses and defects and the Party's failure to function on July 20 are to be explained.

It would, of course, be incorrect to form a theory on the basis of the Party's failure to react on July 20, to the effect that the Party has lost its specific gravity as a militant organisation.

I could cite examples from history, showing how many of our best Parties have, in difficult situations, allowed a favourable moment to pass. Nevertheless that must, under no circumstances, be made a law in the Comintern. In such an accentuated situation as we now have in Germany, the weaknesses and defects of the Party find their expression more clearly, more ruthlessly and with a deeper imprint. This fact was borne out by the happenings of July 20 in Germany. Do you not agree that the causes for our failure to react sufficiently during the bank crash in July, 1931, and the issue of the emergency decree in December and January, are the same causes for those weaknesses which showed themselves with especial clarity on July 20? It would be a mistake not to say so openly here.

I want to add something to what Comrade Florin has already said, on behalf of the German Delegation, in regard to the lessons to be learned and the conclusions to be drawn from July 20.

It has been emphasised here, and borne out, that the Party's appeal for the carrying out of a general strike was not only correct, but necessary, since this slogan was suited to the given situation. Only we did not draw the conclusions from this correct line, for the carrying out of this line in revolutionary practice. We did not succeed in conducting demonstrations, partial strikes, protest strikes and mass direct action. A number of the defects and weaknesses which have here been noted cannot be separated from the inner Party life of the past.

Comrade Manuilsky has rightly spoken of certain fatalistic and defeatist tendencies in the face of Fascism. What fatalistic tendencies (though they do not of course dominate the Party) are still to be met with among us in certain cases? And in what does this defeatism and fatalism find its expression?

Such tendencies of opinion are to be met with; that the revolutionary crisis cannot begin until Fascism has developed the full extent of its power in Germany. It was no accident that certain sections of the unemployed voted for Hitler at the Presidential elections, because they believed that this course would bring us more rapidly to a revolutionary crisis. Among the Social-Democrats, and on the outskirts of our own Party, we meet with expressions of the opinion that Fascism must "play itself out." These opinions, though they are insignificant within our Party, yet constitute an obstacle, to a certain extent, to the launching of movements for partial demands, and lead to an underestimation of the latter. Besides this, there are to be met with in our Party, and especially on its outskirts, people who say: If the Party is compelled to go underground, it will be possible to fight better against Fascism. Such conceptions at the same time provide the best field for the growth of tendencies towards the use of individual terrorism as a substitute for the revolutionary mass struggle against bloody Fascism. Then again, there are to be met with, petty-bourgeois views of a defeatist and pessimist nature which find their expression in such statements as: "If Fascism comes into power, it's all up with us."

We must not underestimate the gravity of this lack of understanding of the importance and the necessity of launching local and partial movements and demonstrations, which constitute important revolutionary prerequisites and pave the way for the real decisive struggles of the working class for the dictatorship of the proletariat. In our Party we have waged a vigorous and consistent struggle against all these tendencies. But it must be said that it is not possible to get rid of these tendencies as they arise, quickly and along the *whole front.*

In addition, we must mention some other political factors: The accentuation of class contradictions in Germany, and the great and surprising political events which have occurred, have created and fostered an instinctive craving for great struggles, for the decisive struggle, among the entire working class, but especially among the organised Free trade union, and Social-Democratic workers. This fact can only be welcomed. But in consequence of our inability to develop this militant urge day by day, the great necessity of launching and carrying through partial and local movements, struggles and strikes in this peculiar situation is not recognised. It is no accident that the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, and above all the S.A.P., demagogically advocated the general strike, for a long time, in their agitation and propaganda in order that they might make it much more difficult for their own adherents to have an understanding, and a militant desire for the launching of partial struggles. But when Germany was brought face to face with the real issue on July 20, it was the leaders of the S.P.D. and the A.D.G.B., German Federation of T.U.'s, who gave their immediate, unconditional and active support to Fascism. This generally prevailing

state of feeling was itself still further fostered by the Social-Democratic "theory" that in a crisis, successful economic struggles are impossible. Even in certain sections of our own Party, there was not always a sufficient degree of clarity on the revolutionary value, on the great significance of the necessity of launching partial struggles and demonstrations.

Comrade Piatnitsky has, not without justice, referred to the importance of the social composition of the Party. The percentage of factory workers among our members has recently diminished. And, on account of this, we have to record an insufficient connection between the Party and the masses of factory workers. Especially in the large enterprises, our organisational and political consolidation leaves much to be desired. These facts constitute an important cause for a certain political preponderance of Social-Democratic ideology among the masses of workers in medium-size and large-scale enterprises. Besides this, we have the further great defect that our factory cells do not form that political and organisational centre in the various enterprises from which all important work ought to radiate. Above all, in the present situation, when we must react quickly, the factory cells must make themselves felt as political factors, and give expression to the leading rôle of the Communist Party, among factory workers, from the Central Committee down to the lowest factory unit.

The third defect is that especially on the question of independent iniative from below, there is an insufficient ability to make decisions among the different Party units. Not always, not in every situation, is it possible to give directives from the centre to the lower Party units. In such situations, as for example, that which arose on July 20, one cannot wait for directives from above. It is, of course, proper and necessary to do so, on all occasions, when such directives are given. But waiting for central directives from the Party can produce most fatal and harmful results both for the Party itself, and for the working class. We must note that, in such situations, the bourgeoisie does all it can to create certain obstacles, to set up barbed wire entanglements, cutting off from access to our organisations, and to the masses, and calculated to hinder the transmission of the directives from the centre. In dealing with this problem, we must raise the question of the personal responsibility of each functionary, to take suitable measures from below, even though this instant reaction should produce some minor mistakes in execution. But if the revolutionary preparedness of the masses is strengthened and steeled by the leadership of the Party, such minor mistakes will not have such a significance, as the great weaknesses, which manifested themselves among us on July 20.

It goes without saying, that the German Party will draw serious practical conclusions from the decisions of the XII Plenum. However, we would like to inform the XII Plenum that two days after the conclusion of the *Reichstag* elections of July 31 we had already registered the principal weaknesses in our Party work, at a national Conference attended by the political secretaries and the principal departmental leaders, in connection with the estimation of July 20, and had introduced suitable practical measures to overcome our weaknesses and defects, and prevent a repetition of the same on a future occasion. I want to quote from the uncorrected stenogram what was said on that occasion on the question of July 20:

"It can be said that there has never before been such a situation as at the present stage of development, when we have daily and hourly to reckon with new events in Germany. I therefore raise this question with such extreme sharpness, because the lessons of July 20 demand that we draw profound conclusions in the inner orientation of our whole Party and in the working class."

Another passage reads as follows:

"Our present conference must, in connection with the accelerated tempo of the Fascist measures, taken by the bourgeoisie, to carry out its programme, recognise the leading rôle of the Party. If the bourgeoisie succeeds in carrying through its programme of Fascist dictatorship without meeting with real and great resistance, and without fresh revolutionary attacks on the part of the proletariat, as unfortunately happened in Germany in the situation of July 20 and 21—I say unfortunately happened—if we, as a revolutionary Party, do not draw new and practical conclusions *within* the Party, from the happenings of July 20 and from the Party's failure to react instantly, then we shall experience sensational surprises in the further course of development. . . .

Viewed from this standpoint, I therefore hold that the events of July 20, and the Party's failure to react sufficiently, constitute a great warning for us."

Another passage reads as follows:

"I therefore hold that the conditions for the political mass strike, and besides this, for the general strike among the proletariat, were abundantly present on July 20, and that the rôle of our Party, as leader of the proletariat, would have been greatly strengthened, had it succeeded in launching strikes and street demonstrations in individual localities through

the independent initiative of our Party comrades in the various enterprises.

"In dealing with this problem, we must raise the question that the days of 1918 to 1919 are now over. In those years we could call a strike by means of leaflets, but to-day the time is passed when strikes can be called by such means."

The final passage reads as follows:

"Our functionaries must be mobilised at certain strategic points in order that, besides meetings on the streets and at unemployment registry offices; demonstrations, direct action in factories and strikes may also take place. As a Party, we have undoubtedly lost prestige in the eyes of the Comintern since, during these days, we have by no means fulfilled our leading role as we should have done."

What special practical conclusions did we draw besides this from July 20? We raised the question with especial sharpness for Berlin. Not only because of the general importance of July 20, but because it was in Berlin that these happenings took place. If in Berlin, where the various enterprises were only in a very few cases informed of the events of the forenoon, we had succeeded in launching great demonstrations during the afternoon between 4 and 5 o'clock—demonstrations which the police could not have left without interference — the S.A., Hitler "Storm detachments," Sections in Germany might well have been mobilised also for the attack; this would undoubtedly have led to cases of mass anti-Fascist direct action, so that July 20 might have placed the most favourable positions in our hands. We must draw the conclusions from these happenings, most especially in the case of Berlin, to prevent a further failure of the Party to react, and to function on future occasions.

There has been one good result from July 20 to which insufficient attention has been given, namely, that the state of feeling among the Social-Democratic workers tends to the view that in the present situation the only solution lies in great struggles. The state of feeling among these workers has to-day been so changed by the capitulation of Severing and other Social-Democratic leaders, that our slogan of the general strike, which we put forward for July 20, is now being recognised by these workers as a correct one. These workers now declare that the Communists were right when they advocated on July 20 a common struggle of the Free trade union, Social-Democratic and Communist workers, and the use of the weapon of the general strike. The state of ferment which is now growing apace in the camp of the S.P.D. and the Free trade unions, is also of great significance, because it penetrates to some extent even among the heads of the Social-Democratic organisations, for example into the fraction in the Reichstag, despite certain manœuvres made by the leaders of the S.P.D. of which we must take note.

[Comrade Thalmann then proceeded to analyse the class nature of the Papen-Schleicher government and the forces which support it: it constitutes a dictatorship of large-scale industry, of the great landowners and the *Reichswehr* generals in connection with the *Junkers*.

One of the main props of the government is the Chemical Trust (*I. G. Farbenindustrie*) but the government is also striving to get into contact with the heavy industry of Western Germany (incidentally by appointing Bracht, from the Catholic Centre Party, to membership of the Prussian Senate).

Comrade Thälmann further described the differences that are appearing in the camp of the bourgeoisie on account of the privileges which are granted by the government to the Prussian agrarians and to certain groups of the great capitalists. He then described the great influence enjoyed under the Papen government by the Nationalists with Hugenberg and the *Stahlhelm* movement at their head, and the fractional struggle for hegemony between them and the National Socialists. The former are fighting for the power of Hindenburg and the latter for the rights of the *Reichstag*].

The happenings in the *Reichstag,* and the fact that the Nazis and the Catholic Centre, as also the S.P.D., came forward ostensibly as representatives of the people's interests, show not only the contradictions in the camp of the bourgeoisie, but, also, at the same time, the subtle demagogy and the Fascist coalitions which are designed to further the whole process of the growth of Fascism, and to hinder the revolutionary upsurge and the further advance of our Party.

With the Hitler Party as its reserve force and the Catholic Centre and the S.P.D. (who, however, employ different methods) as its auxiliaries, the Papen-Schleicher government is launching a furious Fascist attack on the working class and the whole toiling population.

The tempo at which Fascist dictatorship in Germany develops further, depends, above all, on the extent and the strength of the resistance offered by the proletariat, depends on the strength with which the proletariat is led in its resistance, and in its counter-attack against the Fascist offensive, leading on to the immediate struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, and the dictatorship of the proletariat. In this, the political mass strike is the most important weapon of our struggle.

The situation compels us to learn our lesson quickly in the question of leading the masses on to the great decisive struggles.

[Comrade Thälmann went on to give a detailed analysis of von Papen's programme, dealing with the new emergency decree].

The new emergency decree, with its tremendous attack on the toiling masses and against the proletariat, signifies a comprehensive attempt on

he part of the German bourgeoisie to make normous reductions in wages by playing off the actory workers against the unemployed, to mash social insurance and the right to collective argaining, to give billions of marks in the form f state aid to the great capitalists under the pre-ext of "giving a fillip to business for the benefit f the whole population," to decrease its own ifficulties and to betray the toiling masses and he proletariat.

[Comrade Thälmann then explained in detail the mean-ng of the "tax coupons" (*Steuergutscheine*) introduced by he new emergency decree. These represent on the one and a surreptitious gift of 1½ billion marks to the big mployers of labour, who, by increasing the numbers of heir workers, receive a corresponding number of coupons reeing them from the payment of taxes, and, at the same ime, obtain the right to raise assignments of work and o lower wages; on the other hand, they represent an "eye-o-business" measure designed to disseminate discord etween employed and unemployed workers. Finally, the oupon system is a veiled form of inflation. Further the nain aims of the decree against the workers are wage-uts, longer hours and increased taxation. Special neasures against the lower middle class include increased axation].

The Party and the R.G.O. reacted at once to he Papen emergency decree, by holding meet-ngs and framing resolutions of organisations and employees for a struggle and for the use of the strike weapon as an answer to the new emergency lecree. We put forward slogans to mobilise the nasses on the basis of the united front from below, for common resistance and attack. The principal slogans are: Direct action of the prole-arian united front against the policy of starva-ion and emergency decrees: Down with the Papen Government! This latter slogan was nited in our propaganda with another slogan expressing our ultimate aims: For the struggle for the workers' and peasants' republic! Other slogans are: Don't allow any reduction of wage-ates or wages in the factories! Shortening of he working day only on condition of full wage compensation, etc. The slogan of the common struggle of the unemployed together with the factory workers and the appeal to the unemployed not to work in the enterprises without fixed wage-ates, or for reduced wages, likewise form import-ant factors in the mobilisation of the masses.

We demand that the sums given in the form of state aid to the amount of 2,200 billion marks to the great landlords and to large-scale industry, should be used for increasing wages and granting relief to the unemployed. Under these slogans we have already approached the lower units of the S.P.D. and the trade-union organisations, for the purpose of launching the common struggle of all workers irrespective of their political views, or adherence to political organisations, in order to launch a mass offensive along the whole front against the Fascist programme of Von Papen.

Over and above the emergency decrees, the German bourgeoisie is trying, despite (and because of) the difficulties existing in the country, to carry through its plans more aggressively than ever before in the sphere of foreign politics. The demands for equality in armaments, which were laid down in the programme of the Papen-Schleicher Government, and which were drawn up in a special memorandum for the session of the Bureau of the so-called "Disarmament Conference" on September 21, met with a different sort of response in the various quarters of the world. Italy, for example, showed a semi-solidarity with these demands. England was at first reserved and then declared itself more or less openly against them. While France offered the most aggressive resistance to these new demands of German Imperialism. The world historical significance of these demands for equality in armaments drawn up by the Papen-Schleicher Government becomes the more accentuated on account of the new groupings and re-groupings of forces which are taking place in the present changed situation at the end of capitalist stabilisation.

Comrade Pieck yesterday gave an analysis of the various most important demands in this armaments programme, on the basis of which the demands for armaments, are being more precisely drawn up to make a fresh attempt to undermine the Versailles system—attempts which we have already witnessed in the past at the time of the Brüning Government, when the German bourgeoisie vainly attempted to weaken France's hegemony in Europe, by concluding a treaty for a tariff union with Austria. Without doubt the new armaments offensive of the Papen cabinet signifies an intensification of imperialist aggressiveness on the part of the German bourgeoisie and an accentuation of the differences with France. Over and above this, the Papen government wants to divert attention from its home policy of starvation, repression, emergency decrees, etc., by arousing a fresh storm of chauvinist passions.

The section in the memorandum on armaments which deals with the question of the training of a Fascist militia in Germany, is of especial importance for us Communists. It is here quite boldly stated that the S.A. and S.S. detachments, together with the Stahlhelm, are to be officially incorporated in the army to keep down the revolutionary movement. It goes without saying that these detachments are also to find employment as troops in time of imperialist war. Thus the incorporation of the S.S. and the S.A. in the army is important for the German bourgeoisie, both in

a military sense, in conection with foreign policy, and also in connection with home affairs. It is thus no accident that the tremendous offensive of the Papen-Schleicher government is being carried through in conjunction with this programme of armaments for the home front and for foreign policy. By a skilful policy of utilising the various differences in the play of forces between the differ- imperialist powers, the German bourgeoisie is trying to get a hearing for its own policy and thus to attain certain concessions in respect of armaments and, at the same time, to be able to carry through the more easily its most brutal measures against the working class in its own country. The bourgeoisie is arousing chauvinist feelings; it pretends to be against the Versailles system, and by these measures it wants to distract attention from the brutal attack that is being made, by way of wage cutting, the abolition of social insurance, the smashing of the wages law and other measures.

The growth of the wave of chauvinism in Germany is closely connected with the further development of the crisis in the country itself. A new process of the pauperisation of the petty bourgeois and peasant sections of the population has now set in. The petty bourgeois and the poor peasants see their own existence threatened, not only by the present dominating system, by capitalism, but also by the further rise of the revolutionary movement, so that they believe that the proletarian revolution will destroy them and rob them of their property. All these facts create among the petty-bourgeois strata of the toiling masses, that state of feeling which is so calculated to assist the growth of the national Socialist movement.

We cannot in any way assert that the wave of chauvinism is, as yet, on the ebb. We must also take stock of the following facts: The demagogy of the National Socialists makes full use of the way in which Marxism is being discredited by the leaders of the S.P.D. Leading members of the S.P.D. such as Vandervelde and Hermann Müller signed the dictated Versailles Treaty. From this fact the German Fascists attempt to prove that "Marxism" is responsible for the thraldom of the Versailles system. There can be no doubt that millions of the petty bourgeois masses are convinced of the correctness of this view.

Because of the fear of the petty bourgeoisie for the proletarian revolution, the Fascist mass movement, at the same time, constitutes the antithesis to the revolutionary upsurge, which is going on to-day under the leadership of the Communist Party. We may say, further, that the German bourgeoisie is making use of the Fascist mass movement, in the sphere of foreign politics to bring pressure to bear on the powers which are its creditors.

Though the XI. Plenum severely and with justice criticised all false conceptions concerning the development of fascism (the "offensive theory" which taught that the way to fascism in Germany was barred, and the conception of fascism as a mere product of the disintegration of capitalism), since these conceptions represented a dangerous under-estimation of the possibilities of further development on the part of fascism—this XII. Plenum must with equal vigour reject and combat all attempts to under-estimate the elements of disintegration which fascism is showing under present-day conditions.

The most important phenomena of disintegration which can be noted at the present moment are:

Differences within the fascist camp; contradiction between the N.S.D.A.P's, and the Stahlhelm. Differences between the leaders within the N.S.D.A.P. North German Union, Hitler, Strasser, Goebbels. Inner social contradictions, cleavage between officers and men accentuated by the incorporation of the S.A. and S.S. in the capitalist State apparatus. Open signs of disintegration, mutinies with political motive ever more clearly appearing. Protest against the negotiations between Hitler and the Catholic Centre, against the Papen programme, etc. Disillusionment at the practice of labour service. Resistance to military drill. Resistance to anti-Soviet course of policy. Intensification of difficulties through the constant increase of the immediate responsibility of the fascist organisation for the measures taken by the capitalist Government. Loss of confidence in Hitler, etc., in some parts of the organisation. Effect of revelations, etc.

In this connection we must take into account the points which Comrade Ercoli has dealt with in the experience of the development of Italian fascism. We ought even now to begin trying to undermine the principal foundations of fascist dictatorship in the mass movement. We must try to tear the great masses of the population away from the grip of fascist ideology.

As we intensify our militant anti-fascist mass struggle, the ideological mass struggle must become one of the most important weapons in the struggle against fascism. In this field we can already register some substantial gains.

In our struggle against the Versailles system, our standpoint in the question of national oppression, which is closely connected with international exploitation under the conditions of the Versailles system, has been developed by us in our emancipation programme. We have attempted to make an approach to the different sections of the population, above all, to the national socialist front, in order to win them over into the attacking front of the proletariat.

Such facts as Lausanne, the emergency decrees, the open support given to the national socialist movement by the capitalists, and, in addition to this, the revolutionary mobilisation for struggle which we have carried on among the petty bourgeois strata and the poor peasants—all these facts have considerably accelerated the accentuation of class contradictions.

The seriousness, and the sharpening of the present situation, compel us, not only to win over from the Social-Democratic camp, to tear out of this camp, ever fresh forces for the anti-fascist front, but also to win over to our side those forces, whose activity has been led into wrong channels, in the camp of the Nazis. Our ideological struggle against the million-strong National-Socialist Party must not, however, be waged for one moment without a simultaneous, a genuine and most bitter struggle against the hired assassins of the S.A. and S.S. detachments.

As far as Germany is concerned, it can be said that never before has a fascist dictatorship developed with such a great mass movement standing beside the S.P.D. as the National-Socialist Party now represents ; and that at the same time the development of no other fascist movement hitherto, has yet been accompanied by such a strong Communist Party among the proletariat as is now actually to be seen in Germany.

Both those conceptions which were previously rejected by the XI. Plenum of an especial "offensive theory," as though the way were already barred to fascism in Germany, and also, those opinions which later made their appearance, to the effect that fascism had already conquered, and that the fascist dictatorship had undergone its full development, must be sharply rejected by the XII. Plenum. Both the over-estimation, and also the under-estimation of fascism leads to the most dangerous consequences.

A few further remarks about our struggle against Versailles. I think it can be said that our struggle against the dictated Versailles peace, and the Lausanne agreement has lately made considerable progress. Certain progress can be registered in the work among the office employees. The process of disintegration which is beginning in the Nazi camp, the advancing process of radicalisation, the growing mistrust felt among the masses for the policy of the National-Socialist Party, present us with new possibilities of strengthening our mass work in this field. In the countryside, the increasing distress of the small peasantry, and the agricultural labourers, present us with new possibilities of forming alliances with a view to strengthening our work in this field, also on the basis of the measures taken by the capitalist State, in the way of compulsion and taxation, and of the new emergency decrees.

The declaration of our programme for national and social liberation which was then published by us, and our declaration which was adopted at the Plenum of the Central Committee in February, represented powerful weapons for us in the struggle against the Versailles System and those who support it. The new manifesto which has just been published, provides a clear answer to the programme of the Papen Government and indicates the way of common extra-parliamentary mass struggle and our further line of policy against the Versailles System. In our propaganda, we counter the imperialist armaments programme of the Papen-Schleicher Government, by our slogans for the arming of the proletariat.

In our struggle against Versailles, we must speak a comprehensible language—a language which the middle strata of the toilers can also understand. We must carry out genuine mass struggles in order to bring these strata of the population into line behind the revolutionary proletarian vanguard in the struggle against Versailles.

As daily problems arise in connection with the Versailles Treaty, we must react to them day by day in the sense of our liberation programme among the broad masses. To counter the German bourgeoisie's imperialist demands for armaments, we must openly show our revolutionary face both to these demands and to the pacifist demands for disarmament. We must refer to the fact that had the German bourgeoisie been disarmed by the proletariat in 1918, had the dictatorship of the proletariat, based upon the armed workers, been ruthlessly carried through, we should have had no emergency decrees, no von Papen, and no shameful payment of tribute.

We must rid many of our comrades of certain inner inhibitions which they still possess, of certain "apprehensions" that we may have borrowed certain sections from the National-Socialist demands and inserted them in our liberation programme. We must fill the whole Party with a much stronger consciousness that we were and are the first and only opponents of the Versailles System in Germany and that this was so long before the Nazi Party ever existed. We must see to it most carefully that we bring our struggle against wage robbery and emergency decrees into the correct relation with our struggle for liberation from the fetters of the Versailles Treaty.

We must succeed in directing the hatred felt by the petty-bourgeois masses against the Powers to whom they pay tribute, first and foremost, against their own Government, against their own bourgeoisie, and its lackeys, in order to make the true connection of things clear to the masses. It is our task to enlighten the wide masses as to the close connection between the function of gendarme, fulfilled by their own bourgeoisie in its carrying out of the policy of plunder, and the reparations paid to the Powers victorious in the war.

The German Party must concern itself more with the question of the German population in neighbouring countries, and further with that of the working German population abroad. We must not leave them a prey to the National-Socialists, but must emphasise the fact that they will not enjoy the full right of self-determination, and to join the future German Soviet State, until the chains of the Versailles system are broken asunder by the German Soviet republic of the future. In the same way, we must concern ourselves more with the winning over of oppressed foreign minorities in Germany, as, for example, the Polish workers.

Our common struggle, together with our French brother Party, against the Versailles system must be given yet stronger expression and popularised among the masses.

For the tenth anniversary of the occupation of the Ruhr in 1923, the German delegation makes the following proposal: In January, 1933, on the occasion of the anniversary of the occupation, to hold a great campaign in Germany and France, with great mass meetings at which former French soldiers, and German workers, from the formerly occupied territory shall speak on our common revolutionary and proletarian struggle for liberation, and against the Versailles system. In January, 1933, a common manifesto to be issued to the German, French, English, Polish and Belgian proletariat containing a pledge for common fraternal struggle against the shameful Versailles Treaty with special emphasis on the slogan: "The enemy is in your own country!" Our French brother Party is developing especially serious propaganda in the army. ("What has the soldier gained from the Ruhr adventure?" etc.) In addition to this, great demonstrations in the neighbouring countries are to be organised, under the slogans of the struggle against the Versailles system, and for the international revolutionary struggle for liberation.

* * *

Comrades, I want now to deal with the question, in how far the leaders of Social-Democracy, and their policy, have undergone a swing towards fascism, in the development towards fascist dictatorship in Germany. It must be realised that, despite the fact that the bourgeoisie is removing the Social-Democratic leaders from the most important posts in the State and administrative apparatus, the S.P.D. is again and again being drawn into this process of greater fascisation—the process of fascisation among the leaders of the S.P.D. is taking on a higher form. German Social-Democracy has attempted, and to a certain extent it has succeeded, in enlisting the working-class in the further process of higher fascisation, by means of "Left theories" and demagogical manœuvres. (Toleration of the Brüening Government, election of Hindenburg, etc.) The main efforts of the Social-Democratic leaders are directed towards supporting fascism, diminishing its dangerous character, and keeping the masses from waging decisive struggles against the employing class, and the fascist dictatorship in general. What have been the various stages of development in the attitude adopted by the S.P.D.? For a long time, while developments had not yet taken on such a sharp turn, Social-Democracy attempted to treat fascism in general, as a trifling matter. Until quite recently Social-Democracy described fascism as a mere movement of the petty-bourgeoisie, without laying stress on its financial dependence on large-scale industry, or making mention of the fact that fascism is first and foremost a movement of violence and terrorism in the hands of the great capitalists.

Social-Democracy's policy of consistent toleration towards the Brüening Cabinet was and still is an active help for fascism. Under the specious slogan of a struggle against fascism, and with the aid of the theory of the "lesser evil," the Brüening Government was tolerated for years, and in this manner the way was paved for the Papen Cabinet, and for fascism. Parallel with this, the Social-Democrats kept up a talk about the "danger of a Nazi *Putsch*" and this, at a time when there could be no talk of any such danger from this movement. Social-Democracy put forward two "theories." The first "theory" was that of letting the National-Socialists "play themselves out." The second "theory," which is connected with the first, takes the view that a possible Schleicher-Hitler Government, and an actual Papen Government are after all better than a "pure" Hitler Government. In this manner the way is being paved for the toleration of such a Cabinet. So we see how, in theory and practice, Social-Democracy supports all measures of fascisation. Not till quite recently did the bourgeoisie attempt, by making propaganda for the so-called "third front," which was to extend from Strasser via Stegerwald to Leipart, to create certain approaches to fetter millions of workers to the policy of fascist dictatorship, especially on the trade union front. The description of the Papen Government as a "Government of Hitler barons" was made by Social-Democracy with the express object of veiling and concealing this Government's dependence on large-scale industry. This fact is hushed up, because the aim is to keep the organised masses of Social-Democratic and Free trade union workers from a genuine struggle against the offensive of capital. The leaders of the S.P.D. and the A.D.G.B. are thus attempting to prevent a struggle in the factories against the Papen Cabinet.

Every fresh stage in the support of fascism by Social-Democracy is accompanied by a certain amount of "social" demagogy and by suitable demagogic phrases. In the past the catchword was the so-called "free people's State" and "State

apitalism" as a transition to a "development to ocialism." In this way the S.P.D. attempted to ivet its fetters, theoretically and practically, upon the nasses of the population, to guarantee support for the urpose of fascisation. In recent times, the S.P.D. as attempted to make headway with certain trea- herous "Left" manœuvres and with the slogans of he "reconstruction of economy," of "socialist ction," etc. There was even a spurious use of the hrase "socialist construction"—under the dictator- hip of the bourgeoisie, let it be noted. Recently we ave witnessed various efforts at feelers and agree- nents between the fascist and social-fascist economic heoreticians. It is a generally known fact that a artial agreement has already been reached between he National-Socialists and the Social-democrats, in he question of compulsory labour service, and in the plans for the provision of work." The important act for us is that this process of fascisation on a igher plane, in the camp of the S.P.D. will have rofound new changes as its consequence. Various omrades have already quite rightly referred to the act that the process of radicalisation, and to some xtent also the process of cleavage in the S.P.D., in Germany, will have a different development from hat in Italy, Poland and other countries. The eaders of the S.P.D. and the A.D.G.B. are already eginning to work hand in hand with the fascist dictatorship. In many places members of the S.P.D. were ejected from the positions they held in the State administration, it is true, but such leaders of the S.P.D. as Noske and Zörgiebel still occupy their State posts, even under the Government of fascist dictator- ship. Among the members, as also among the middle and lower cadres of functionaries, this policy of their social-fascist leaders, is producing a profound new process of radicalisation. All this gives us abundant opportunities for deepening and success- fully consolidating our revolutionary mass work within the S.P.D., and the trade union movement. Precisely at the present stage of development in Germany fascism and social-fascism are appearing in their true colours as "twin brothers," as Comrade Stalin once acutely emphasised, though this does not imply that they have reached absolute agreement. In the resolution it is rightly stated that fascism and social-fascism cannot be treated as synonymous. The peculiar methods of betrayal, the peculiar tactical measures taken by these two wings of fascism must be concretely demonstrated. At the present stage of progressive fascisation, any weakening of our struggle in principle against Social-Democracy, as representing the main social support of the bour- geoisie, would be a grievous mistake, especially because the neglect of this struggle might produce new and dangerous illusions among the masses, to the effect that the Social-Democratic Party is an anti- fascist force. The specious opposition of the S.P.D. the fact that it stands outside the Government, the fact that the policy of the S.P.D. is adorned with trappings of "left" demagogy, makes it the more difficult for millions of workers to understand the policy of class betrayal pursued by their own leaders, and confronts us with a serious duty of laying bare all these facts to a much greater degree, of exposing their class causes and setting them in a true light.

In accordance with the Party line, and with the help of the Comintern, and of the resolutions that have been passed, our Party has of late been combating, with great success, all tendencies to weaken the struggle in principle against Social-Democracy, and has fought with all severity against all conceptions that the main offensive within the working-class ought no longer to be directed against Social-Democracy and against all deviations in this field.

After the coming into power of the Papen Govern- ment, certain tendencies to deviation from the general line of the Party in this fundamental question of our policy and tactics manifested themselves among individual comrades in Germany. Our Party leader- ship set its face severely against the attitude which found its expression in an article entitled "Change of System"; this article was put before the secretariat, and its publication prevented. This article contains, besides a number of other incorrect formulations, one absolutely false formulation, namely, "that the bourgeoisie is temporarily renouncing the co- operation of Social-Democracy as its main social support." In this we see a wholly inadmissible estimation of the role of the S.P.D. in the present situation. The tactical conclusions which have been drawn from the false estimation of the rôle of the S.P.D. in the above-mentioned article, are sub- stantially on a par with the proposals of the Berlin district leadership—proposals which were made to the Social-Democratic Party with a view to the holding of joint demonstrations, and which were rightly rejected by the Central Committee of our Party, and corrected in the case of Berlin.

The article contains among other things the following passage :

> "At the present time the ' democratic ' tendency is no longer the dominant one ; it is now the fascist wing (?) against which the main onslaught of the revolutionary mass struggle must be directed.
>
> "It lies in the nature of things that in directing this offensive we should on occasion come into the same line of action in which the specious Social- Democratic opposition is operating (!).
>
> "A number of measures which we have recently taken both in the province of parliamentarianism (?) and also in the extra-parliamentary struggle, clearly show the changed tactics which we have begun to employ.
>
> "But, above all, the demand of the Berlin- Brandenburg district leadership to the ' Iron

Front' movement, to hold a joint demonstration against fascism, is most appropriate here."

In this we see the continuation of the false judgment of the rôle of the S.P.D. The proposal made by the leaders of the Berlin district to the "Iron Front" was sharply criticised by us, because it expressed an over-estimation of the degree of maturity attained by the Social-Democratic workers, and an under-estimation of our own power among the working-class, for the organisation of widespread demonstrations of the united front from below, coupled with a surrender in the face of certain sentimental feelings in favour of unity which are to be met with. It is quite clear that we could not allow an article containing such distortions of our Party line to go out into the Party, or to the wider public, unless we wanted to create the greatest confusion and chaos.

I want to add a word or two on the various grouplets which we have in Germany, in the form of the S.A.P., the Brandlerists, and the Trotskyists. These "left" branches of social-fascism—the S.A.P. and the Brandler group—have openly shown their social-fascist face precisely in the final period. Comrade Stalin's most important letter to the magazine *Proletarian Revolution** was of great assistance to all Parties, and especially to us in Germany, in the struggle against "Right" opportunism and "Left" sectarianism, against the hidden remnants of Luxemburgism and Trotskyism ; meanwhile, however, the examples given above show that, unfortunately, the significance of this letter has not everywhere been grasped in good time and in its full content. There existed a great lack of clarity in our own ranks, in the judgment passed upon Luxemburgism, and also in the question of Trotskyism as a counter-revolutionary ideology. In the question of making a correct estimation of Centrism, the historically important letter of Comrade Stalin helped us to correct, and abolish with all speeed, the vagueness to be met with in the German Party, and the mistakes made in the *Rote Fahne*. In view of the powerful growth of fascism in Germany, petty bourgeois persons from the ranks of the renegades, and the factional groups very easily lose their nerve and develop the most counter-revolutionary theories. These factional groups, although they are organisationally very weak, can cause, and have already caused, temporary confusion, in certain situations, among individual sections of the working-class. Recently these persons frequently raised the question of the 'alliance of the K.P.D. and the S.P.D." and, the question of "common voting lists" at the presidential elections before us, and the working-class. Trotsky wants, in all seriousness, to see the Communists going hand in hand with the murderers of Liebknecht and of Rosa Luxemburg and beyond this with Herr Zörgiebel, and with any police president whom the Papen regime chooses to leave in office, for the repression of the proletariat. Trotsky has attempted, on more than one occasion, to lead the working-class astray by his writings, by demanding negotiations between the leaders of the K.P.D. and the S.P.D. Among other things he said as follows, to quote him word for word :

"One must actually declare complete readiness to form a bloc with the Social-Democrats against fascism. . . . One must compel Social-Democracy to form a bloc against the fascists."

This policy would mean that we would abandon our correct Bolshevik policy, and adopt one which would be even much worse than that which manifested itself most crassly in 1923, in the German Party, in the policy of the Brandlerists, in the question of the false theory of the State, the erroneous policy of the united front, and the policy of a bloc with the "Left" Social-Democrats.

We, and the German revolutionary proletariat, received a crushing reminder of the fatal character of this "Left" Social-Democratic policy, in the defeat sustained in October, 1923.

In his writings, which are imbued with the most profound hatred against the Comintern, Trotsky further upholds the thesis that "victorious fascism will one time or another fall a victim to the objective contradictions and to its own insufficiency."

This fatalistic thesis that fascism has already triumphed over the working-class,this dangerous and defeatist Trotskyist "theory" is further accompanied by Trotsky's demands that the formation of a Hitler Government in Germany should be signalised by the Red Army's marching upon Germany, that is to say, declaration of war upon Germany by the Soviet Union. This "radical" proposal constitutes a provocation which, objectively, is in no way surpassed by the criminal acts of Gorgulov, Vasilyev, Stern, and the rest. Trotsky, who has placed himself at the head of the counter-revolutionary vanguard against the Soviet Union, dares to reproach the Comintern with "capitulating in panic before fascism."

A similar tendency may be observed among those renegades, formerly Trotskyists, around Urbahns, who spread their literary filth in certain localities in Germany, with their paper *The Banner of Communism*. They, too, want to produce confusion among the revolutionary workers. *The Banner of Communism* even contains the following demand :

"The Communists must and should set a goal for the workers. This goal is now the Government of the Weimar coalition, which is possible with the help of the Communists."

According to this, the K.P.D. ought to form an "alliance" not only with the social-fascists, but also

* No. 20 "Communist International," 1931.

vith the Centre Party of the great capitalists such as Klockner and Louis Hagen, with the Centre Party of Herr Papen, Herr Bracht, Prince von Löwenstein, tc. To what depths these renegades have now allen is shown by their counter-revolutionary ttitude.

The party of Seydewitz and Rosenfeld likewise pholds, in conjunction with the Brandlerists, the logan of an "alliance between the S.P.D. and the K.P.D." in Germany. The last Reichstag elections, t which the K.P.D. received eighty-nine mandates, vhile Sedewitz and his friends of the S.A.P. did not eceive a single mandate, have already shown the ignificance of these "splinter" groups.

However, it would be an act of negligence to orsake, or to relax the struggle against renegacy. t must be realised that, as "left" branches of social-ascism, with their theories adapted to the backward onceptions of many sections of the proletariat, these persons may still, at certain times, and in certain situations, cause confusion and do political damage.

The policy of Social-Democracy in supporting the neasures of the fascists, is already meeting with trong resistance in its own ranks.

Especially during recent months, the best hated people among the German proletariat are the S.A. nd S.S. detachments, the murder troops of fascism. Everywhere where we have had to do with a mass ttack of these terrorist groups, where we have ucceeded in getting rid of the tendencies to indi-idualist terrorism, and, aided by the resistance of the eal revolutionary masses, have succeeded in setting n motion a mass front from all sections of the workers —everywhere where we have done this, we have mmensely strengthened our authority among the ntire working-class of the district in question and ave carried out direct action of the united front on a road scale. We have not only had success at the lections, but we have also been able in many cases o launch economic strikes for partial demands, demonstration strikes and even political mass strikes. Through the campaign for anti-fascist direct action, ve have drawn over to our side many Social-Demo-ratic, free trade union and even Christian workers by orming mass self-defence organisations, so that these rganisations come to represent a real weapon of lefence and attack in the hands of the proletariat nder the leadership of the "Anti-Fascist Direct Action." Political questions are already beginning o be discussed far more eagerly in these organisations. An approach to the militant revolutionary point of iew is being made. We are fully justified in sserting that, in this field, real progress is to be ecorded. Let us take one or two examples showing he composition of the self-defence organisations. take Hamburg as an example.

One group contains 125 non-Party workers, 0 Social-Democrats and 65 Communists. In another group there are 15 non-Party workers, 20 Social-Democrats and 30 Communists. In a third self-defence organisation there are 56 non-Party, 24 Social-Democrats and 30 Communists, while in another group we have 158 non-Party members, 6 Social-Democrats and 96 Communists.

In the Düsseldorf district, in Cologne and also in the Ruhr district, we have succeeded in drawing larger numbers of the Christian workers into these mass self-defence organisations. For example, in the city district of Rosenhügel in Remscheid, we have an organisation consisting of 75 members, of whom 40 are Catholic workers, and 20 members of a bourgeois defence union. The decisive problem for the Party now consists in directing the profound hatred, the militant initiative and the genuine aggressive spirit which the militant proletariat feels against the most hated class enemy, against the attacks of the Papen Government, and of the capitalist system in general, in order that we may succeed in launching genuine mass direct action among the unemployed, and more especially in the factories against the new and subtle methods of wage-cutting which are being employed. For example, in places where there have been really serious anti-fascist offensives, we can point to great protest demonstrations, and mass direct action which have had a political character, and which have also led among different sections of the industrial workers to the launching of certain movements. At the present time we can say that there have been new forms of struggle, on a higher level, of a similar character to those in Poland : A detachment of the League for Struggle Against Fascism marches into an enterprise with the red flag ; a speech is made, and the employees of the enterprise are enlightened politically, and encouraged to call a strike in the enterprise against the policy of emergency decrees A few months ago in Wuppertal, we succeeded in getting nine enterprises, each employing at least 300 men, to come out on strike in an anti-fascist gesture of protest. The strike was immediately carried out by all nine enterprises as one man. We must give more scope to such examples and improve upon them.

The working-class is beginning to realise from its past experience that in view of the accentuation of the crisis, etc., the policy of the S.P.D. offers no avenue of escape from the crisis. The Social-Democratic workers are already beginning to-day to pay far more attention to the slogans of the Communist Party, both those expressing immediate demands and those embodying our ultimate aims. In this way the positions which our Party holds within the working-class are being considerably strengthened.

* * *

Comrades, now the question of the inner development of the Party, the struggle for the carrying out of the general line of the Comintern, in connection with certain facts regarding the inner life of the Party. In

view of the complicated situation created by the struggle against the bourgeoisie, against the National-Socialist movement and against Social-Democracy, our Party, under the leadership of the Comintern, has become more mature, has grown strong both within and without. Our Party has at its disposal hundreds of thousands of proletarian fighters ; it has also cadres of tried and trusted functionaries, many of whom have also had experience of the days when the Party was illegal. Standing side by side with the Party, we have great anti-fascist mass organisations which have not only been strengthened politically, but have also grown in the organisational sense, especially in recent times. The fact that our ideological offensive has presented us with great possibilities of accelerating the process of disintegration which is to be seen in the camp of the S.S., the S.A. and, above all, in that of the *Reichsbanner* movement, by the holding of special discussion evenings, by the distribution of printed matter, etc., opens up new prospects for our success in the mass anti-fascist struggle. The League for Struggle Against Fascism, and other mass organisations have recently enjoyed great success. The electoral victory which we won on July 31 represents a break-through of the mass strength of the Communist Party of Germany, and has a great extra-parliamentary significance, which can only be under-estimated and belittled by those who have no understanding of the conditions of the revolutionary advance in Germany, and for the upward curve of revolutionary development. Anyone who wants to under-estimate or depreciate the increasingly leading rôle of the K.P.D., anyone who tries to weaken this leading rôle under the difficult conditions of the present situation—such a person can have no understanding of what it means to have won 5,300,000 votes in an electoral struggle, waged according to principle, against all our class enemies. We cannot, however, enhance these successes unless we are able, seriously, and with revolutionary fervour, to find new methods of revolutionary mass work, and by means of new forms of struggle, to counter the attacks of the fascist dictatorship by mass attacks of the proletariat with increasing boldness and courage. It is quite true that the results of the election only give a limited picture of the course of development. Of much greater importance is the general state of our revolutionary work and the general position of the Party among the masses. At the national conference of political secretaries on August 3, we said "that we have beaten Social-Democracy at the *polls*, now we must stem its mass influence in the *enterprises* and *trade unions* and defeat it there, too." Despite the desperate manœuvres of our antagonists, despite the unexampled pressure of the class enemy on our front, despite all acts of provocation and all attempts to decimate and demoralise the revolutionary vanguard of the German proletariat, we have nevertheless grown and increased in the fire of the class struggle.

I now want to refer to certain connections between questions of inner Party life, questions of the inner development of the Parties, with the general situation. It is quite inevitable that the turning points of political and historical development should again and again evoke special phenomena of an inner Party nature, vacillations which have their roots in an insufficient understanding of the new conditions, under which we have to perform our work. The greatest danger, for example, which we must envisage to-day is the under-estimation of the revolutionary possibilities, capitulation before the class enemy, loss of courage in the face of the tremendous tasks with which history has confronted us. But it is also our duty most severely to combat and to overcome the other danger—that of specious revolutionary exaggerated phraseology, and sectarian isolation from the masses.

Our Russian friends have already spoken about the differences of opinion with Comrade Neumann, but I think that it is necessary to throw more light upon these examples, by producing new facts, and to show where the points of political difference with Comrade Neumann, and certain other individual functionaries lie.

Let us take up the question of the carrying out of the decisions of the Comintern, in connection with the XI Plenum. In this field of the carrying out of the decisions of the XI Plenum, have we not had a certain amount of vacillation and vagueness in the German Party, with regard to the question of the development of fascism ? Of course we have ! These vacillations have their roots still further back. Such facts as, for example, in the question of the under-estimation of the National Socialist movement. Comrade Neumann said in regard to the formidable success of the National-Socialists at the *Reichstag* elections on September 14, 1930, that this was "Hitler's best day" and the climax of this movement. This led to an incorect estimation of this great mass movement, and to a temporary neglect of our work among these masses. Neumann went from one extreme to the other. In December, 1930, i.e., some three months after the *Reichstag* elections, he obstinately adhered to the standpoint that "fascist dictatorship has already come"—how could we then make it possible to convince the masses, to mobilise them and activise them for the struggle against the different forms of the further process towards fascist dictatorship. Thus, at the very outset, there were great differences of opinion. When we further attempted to find formulations in a less rigid application of the policy of the proletarian united front—for example, "We stretch out our hands as brothers to the Social-Democratic workers"—this was in many cases greeted with ironical observations such as

"following in the wake of the Social-Democratic workers," as Comrade Neumann described it.

NEUMANN (interjecting): Where?

THALMANN: You expressed yourself against the formulations more than once in the pamphlet, on the speech delivered in the *Sportpalast*.

NEUMANN (interjecting): I was speaking of the S.A.P. leaders, of following in the wake of Seydewitz and Rosenfeld.

THALMANN: These other calumniations spread by you, and other comrades, concerning that passage in the speech are unjustified. The passage has everywhere been established to be correct and politically faultless, as against your false conception of it. What was said there was a self-evident observation, and a perfectly correct one, but what you falsely described there as "following in the wake" not only of the "left" S.P.D. leaders, but also the Social-Democratic workers, only strengthens the impression of the German delegation that you are not in agreement with our correct mass tactics.

In connection with the application of the policy of the united front, we have had questions that have already been criticised here. The question as to whether we formulate it "united revolutionary front" or "united Red front" or "united proletarian front," etc.—that depends on the special situation obtaining in the different countries. But when we had in Germany such views as those upheld by Neumann, that the slogan of the "united Red front" should be changed to the slogan "Red workers' front" in order that, as he alleged, the character of the hegemony of the proletariat might find more sharp expression, that means nothing more than renderng the urge of the masses towards unity more difficult and excluding important sections of the population from the united front. The slogan of the "united Red front" constitutes one of the most important weapons for winning over the unorganised and Social-Democratic workers, and over and above this the toiling strata of the population, for the united proletarian front to fight for their own demands.

In the province of inner-trade union work such incorrect slogans were to be met with as the slogan upheld by Neumann "Smash the A.D.G.B.!', The appeal which was temporarily put forward to bar contribution payments in the enterprises was likewise false. Comrade Neumann, and other comrades too, were then upholders of the view that we ought to found Red trade unions, or Red federations, without first having certain prerequisites for a genuine mass basis for them.

NEUMANN (interjecting): Never!

THALMANN: I know for certain, and I had expected that everything I said about your political mistakes would be described by you as a lie. When the letter of the R.I.L.U. on inner-trade union work appeared in the autumn, you said "it contained nothing new," thereby belittling the importance of the letter.

For quite a long time in our struggle against the National-Socialists, we had the false slogan "Beat the fascists wherever you meet them!" At the XI Plenum, and in the German delegation, this slogan was not yet recognised as a serious mistake. Comrade Neumann was of the opinion that this slogan ought not to be described as a mistake, but as a slogan which was no longer expedient, no longer suited to the situation. What was the meaning of this slogan "Beat the fascists wherever you meet them!" It made our work among the anti-capitalist adherents of the Nazis everywhere more difficult, and in addition to this we were hampered in the genuine ideological mass struggle against the National-Socialists. With the growth of fascism we could not for a minute cease, without infinitely weakening the militant mass struggle, to make an approach to this million-strong movement in order to tear away the proletarian elements and the anti-capitalist adherents from this front with much greater mobility and aggressiveness.

In the development of the ideological offensive in the ranks of our own Party, with a view to clearing up and getting rid of the erroneous measures in the carrying out of the decisions of the XI Plenum, our difficulties were often increased by this. In the question of passing judgment on weaknesses and defects, of exercising a genuine self-criticism in the Party to efface these basic weaknesses, there was no agreement between Comrade Neumann and us. Violent differences of opinion resulted in this field. Not once did Comrade Neumann show any deep understanding for the fact that theory and practice are a unity, that, in view of the accentuation of the whole situation and the sharpness of the struggle in principle against all our class enemies, we must attempt to have complete clarity precisely in the basic questions, in order to fulfil in practice also the larger revolutionary tasks with which we are confronted.

Five or six months after the session of the XI Plenum, in checking up and examining the decisions then passed, in the carrying out of our revolutionary work, we had to record that, in different questions, we were not in complete accord with the formulation of the problems as they were put at the XI Plenum. When we began to correct our insufficiently clear conceptions in certain individual questions, and when we began to make a fresh ideological breakthrough in the Party, we again witnessed resistance in this province, more especially in the case of Comrade Neumann, who was not convinced, and who did not show understanding for the necessity of clarification in regard to the basic questions of the XI Plenum.

After the appearance of such an extraordinarily important letter as that addressed by Comrade Stalin

to the magazine *Proletarian Revolution*, the *Rote Fahne* published this letter with an introduction which was revised and edited by Comrade Neumann, and which contained two grave political mistakes; these had to be corrected by the Central Committee, a fact to which Comrade Ulbricht has already referred.

One of the passages reads as follows:

"In this development, our Party has defeated the Right opportunism of the Brandlerists, and the veiled 'Left' ideology of swamp Trotskyism."

Thus Trotskyism is here presented, counter to the clear words of Comrade Stalin, not as the counter-revolutionary vanguard of the bourgeoisie, but as 'swamp ideology." The S.A.P., the "Left" branch of social-fascism, is similarly estimated in the following false manner:

"Once again a Party, to be sure a small Party, of Centrism, an organisation which occupies an unprincipled position between revolutionary Marxism-Leninism, and social-fascism, is attempting to hinder the Social-Democratic workers from going over into the camp of the Communist Party."

Comrade Neumann has thus completely misapprehended the Stalin letter in the most essential points and in its great significance, and has displayed great frivolity in questions of theory.

In the case of Comrade Neumann, we have also to note a dangerous tendency to gloss over and to some extent to take refuge behind objective difficulties—precisely the tendencies which were decisively rebuffed by the XII Plenum. The weaknesses of Party work were attributed by him in the main to *objective* factors (in contradistinction to the resolution of the February Plenum of the Central Committee). At the February Plenum we said as follows on this question:

"I have already . . . referred to the fact that it is inadmissible to make use of objective difficulties, as an excuse for passivity, for insufficient struggles etc. In the discussion on this question, there has been, it is highly gratifying to note, a complete consensus of opinion. In regard to the question of the additional difficulties of the crisis, such as unemployment, etc., in their relation to the leadership of strikes, we have already shown that they, on the one hand, render the leadership of strikes more complicated, but that on the other hand these objective factors render the leadership of mass struggles more easy. We must keep both sides of the process continually in view—not only the difficulties but also the revolutionary factors which result from one and the same fact. Such a way of putting the case is also necessary in considering the international significance of the German revolution.

"In view of the great difficulties which arise for the German revolution on the basis of the Versailles system, in view of which the German proletariat not only comes up against the front of the German bourgeoisie, but also against the larger front of the victorious powers throughout the whole world, the revolutionary factors in Germany are also increasing at the same time within the bounds of this Versailles system."

Comrade Neumann also opposed a later criticism which appeared in the *Internationale*, of an appeal of the Central Committee, in which the incorrect slogan of the "triple alliance of the toilers" was allowed to pass under his control. He opposed a self-criticism of the Party leadership, of the incorrect estimation of fascism, which the XI Plenum had corrected. He opposed a well-grounded and absolutely necessary criticism of the literary work of individual comrades (Langner for example), thus disclosing a petty-bourgeois feeling of false loyalty towards his friends. In all these points we had sharp differences with Comrade Neumann.

Many political points of difference have in the past not been openly brought to light in regard to the question of unity of leadership. If differences of opinion arise in regard to questions of tactics, that is understandable and can often happen. But when these differences of opinion are of such a character that the carrying out of the general line of the Party is thereby weakened, that the revolutionary mass policy does not attain a Bolshevik character, does not attain revolutionary maturity, when in addition to this we are lagging behind the favourable objective conditions in our methods of the application of the tactics of the united front not only in the trade unions and in the factories, but also among the unemployed, then it is necessary, as was done in the article published in the *Internationale* in December, 1931, to make a serious ideological thrust and breakthrough, against the will of Comrade Neumann, and of other comrades in this field. The facts and the successes we have gained have justified us; for the few months which have elapsed since the launching of the "Anti-Fascist Direct Action" campaign have already shown that we are tackling with much greater courage and much greater intensity the tasks of tearing the masses away from Social-Democratic ideology and enlisting them in the revolutionary class front. Such elasticity as we have to exercise to-day in the application of the policy of the united front results in a higher stage of maturity in the Party, and a strengthening of our capacity to manœuvre.

Besides Comrade Neumann, there are certain other comrades in our Party, who not only spread their false conceptions abroad among the members, but also undertake disorganising measures calculated to depreciate the work of the Party leadership. In this difficult and accentuated situation, when the bourgeoisie and its satellites are everywhere attempting to discredit and belittle the authority of the Party leadership, the taking of disorganising measures amounts to an attack on the unity and solidarity of

the Party as a whole. When this activity, moreover, takes on the larger form of a factional activity, then I think, comrades, you must agree that we have here to deal not only with a breach of revolutionary discipline, but with a contempt for the statutes and the basic organisational maxims, with a violation of the fundamental principles of the Party. If Comrade Neumann, as a member of the Central Committee, again takes such shameful steps against the unity of the Party, and continues in the way that he has taken, this will very soon spell certain political death for him.

Comrades, those who interfere with and sabotage the work of the Party and of the Young Communist League, those who further attempt to discredit the leadership of the Party—such persons will not and should not cause us to shrink from taking organisational measures.

It is not a question here of a struggle of individual comrades among one another, or of a quarrel between individual comrades, as is sometimes falsely and demagogically stated; it is here a question of political problems in the mass policy and in the improvement of our entire Party work. Here, it is not a question of subsidiary problems, it is a question of the basic problems involved in the decisions of the Central Committee, which in the present especially intense situation confront the leadership with such tasks and conditions, that they are in no way justified in allowing any relaxation of revolutionary discipline, or of the Bolshevik principles of organisation. From this standpoint also, we have felt obliged to draw the appropriate conclusions for the more active carrying out of the line of the Comintern, and of the decisions adopted by our Central Committee, and to introduce such measures as may give us increased assurance that the decisions of the Comintern may be carried out with the whole power of the Party.

I want also to mention here that certain attempts were made to discredit the absolutely correct statements of our February Plenum of the Central Committee, on the question of State capitalism. The resolution on the first point of the agenda of the XII Plenum, confirms the fact that the judgment passed on the question of State capitalism as given by the K.P.D. in the C.C. Plenum of February, 1932, is perfectly correct.

Comrades Kuusinen and Chemodanov have already mentioned the fact that there were one or two difficulties in the policy of our Young Communist League, that there were cases of resistance to the line of policy laid down by the E.C.C.I., the Y.C.I. and by our C.C. We have to do here with certain reflections of the questions already dealt with. The Comintern, together with the Y.C.I. and the German Party leadership, is of the opinion that there have been recently various deviations and vaguenesses to record in the Young Communist League of Germany in regard to the carrying out of the general line of the Party. We must further note that precisely at the present time any tendency to a further alienation of the Y.C.L. leadership from the Party, must be most sharply combated as a most dangerous manifestation. This alienation was not to be met with in the whole of the Y.C.L. leadership, nor in the lower sections of the German Y.C.L. We therefore hope that the relations of the Y.C.L. to the Party may the more quickly be put upon such a basis that we can together defeat the class enemy on the different fronts.

In order to improve the work of the Young Communist League, we will probably not be able to avoid taking certain organisational measures, which will assure that the decisions of the Comintern and the Party may be carried out. The strong attitude adopted by the Y.C.I. and the Party towards the Y.C.L., together with certain decisions which we are making here, will make it possible to bring the Y.C.L. once more into complete alignment with the whole policy of the Party within the shortest possible time.

Summing up, we have to recognise the following in the German Party: July 20 showed up the weaknesses and defects of the Party, in a sharper light than has been the case in previous events.

We must therefore try, in view of the greater demands with which our Party is confronted by the present objective situation, to be much more vigilant, much more responsible and much more active in the question of really carrying out the decisions and the tactical measures, in order to approach more closely to our main strategic aim—that of winning over the majority of the working-class for the struggle for political power.

Comrades, what conclusions are we to draw in the field of general political measures and in the field of inner-Party measures?

The main point is to make the German Party a really powerful fighting Party. The tendency which is occasionally to be met with, and which is fostered by the bourgeoisie, with its miserable deception of parliamentary elections—the tendency to employ mere propaganda and agitation—must be overcome. We must have an inner process of transformation among the responsible Party workers. Every Party member must become fully conscious of his tremendously responsible work.

The leading Party committees must take on the form of genuine collective organs; they must acquire the capacity for direct action, and must undergo a process of qualitative improvement and strengthening. We will likewise attempt to improve the fraction leaderships of the mass unions to be able to concentrate the whole force of all proletarian organisations, at the necessary moment on to the strategically important key-points.

We will do all we can to see that the leading committees of the Party get into better immediate contact with the masses. For this, what is necessary first and foremost, is a change in the methods of work. We want to do away with the system of long-

winded and tedious instructions, and to mobilise our members by concentration on a few decisive main points.

We have already begun—and we are continuing this process—to diminish the upper apparatus of the Party in size, and to extend and strengthen the lower apparatus of functionaries. The comrades in the German delegation have seen in their visit to the Moscow factory "Dynamo" how the reorganisation of the Party apparatus, which followed the speech of Comrade Kaganovich accompanied by the strengthening of the lower cadres, produced brilliant progress and an improvement of the results of work.

Of extraordinary importance is the strengthening of independent initiative among our lower leading committees and lower organisations. We are going to impress them with the greatness of their immediate responsibility in the coming struggle. July 20 showed up the great lack of independent initiative in our Party. As we have to daily reckon with surprises and with sudden great attacks from our opponents, etc., the rapid and immediate reaction of our cadres is a matter of life and death necessity for our revolutionary policy. Comrade Stalin said in 1929 in the Presidium of the E.C.C.I.:

"Time does not wait—and we must not allow events to take us by surprise."

We want to do everything to convert our cadres into a strong fighting Party—eager for the attack and always ready for the offensive, and capable of manœuvring—a Party which will make it impossible for the bourgeoisie and for Social-Democracy to repeat what happened on July 20.

In the measures we are taking in the immediate future, we will lay especial stress on the task of awakening independent and revolutionary initiative among our illegal factory cells which are working conspiratively.

These cells ought to be in permanent connection with the Party and the masses. The inner life of the Party cells must be considerably improved, must grow and develop, for without an improvement in the life of the lower Party units, we will not get rid of the strong tendency to fluctuation. We do not want in the future to conduct our policy of concentration on the large enterprises as we have done in the past—sporadically and by the temporary establishment of a shock brigade—but by establishing our best comrades for a considerable period of time, during which a pertinacious, steady and persevering work will be carried on in order to strengthen and develop the mass influence of our cells.

In making further use of the counsels and decisions of the XII Plenum, we will try to raise the level of our Party members in order that they may be in a position to take the necessary measures with more quickness and resolution. The more we concern ourselves with carrying out among the masses the correct general line of the Party and thereby promote the ideological offensive and Bolshevik self-criticism, the more will those weaknesses and defects of July 20 and the existing gulf between the resolutions adopted and their carrying out, disappear.

Finally, we will immediately commence, with political severity, but in a thoroughly comradely way, to assist the German Y.C.L. and promote the process of assistance by certain working measures in order to make the Y.C.L. a mass movement of the young proletariat, a powerful instrument against fascism and a reservoir of active young revolutionary and socialist fighters, while destroying the mass influence of the S.A.J.

Finally, the ever nearer approach of the suppression of the Party demands, that we combine the utilisation of all legal possibilities as closely as possible with illegal work, in order to create the necessary conditions that the lower Party units may have a certain assurance, that when the new measures of suppression are issued the Party may be ready to strike in order to fulfil its class tasks. The fact that the *Rote Fahne* and other newspapers have been suppressed for four weeks, while the *Anti-Fascist Direct Action* and other mass sheets and journals have been suppressed for six months, etc., coupled with the accentuated degree of the whole process of fascisation, compels us to take all steps necessary to secure and to carry out illegal work.

Now a few words on the question of the higher stage of our struggle against the measures of fascist dictatorship and on the task with which our Party is confronted in the struggle, for the revolutionary way out of the crisis and the workers' and peasants' republic.

I have already said that with the introduction of the Anti-Fascist Direct Action we have found the first methods and forms of struggle for the mobilisation of the masses—forms which show a higher degree of the development of capacity for struggle in the proletariat and the Party.

The second stage consists in bringing the Anti-Fascist Direct Action into the factory. The new factors in the political developments in Germany, the measures taken by the bourgeoisie and the fascist Parties, compel us all the more to aim at a broad development of mass initiative, in order to lead the masses on to great political mass struggles, to mobilise them *en masse* against wage robbery, and the policy of starvation and the armaments policy of the present Papen Government. The brilliant example of our mass defensive struggle against fascism at Altona met with a lively response among all anti-fascists throughout the length and breadth of Germany, and put fear into the hearts of the bourgeoisie. In truth, the prevention of the fascist demonstration and the violent fighting and shooting which went on for hours on end in the working-class districts, was a blazing signal for the anti-fascist mass struggle.

The Social-Democratic Party has now introduced a so-called "Socialist Direct Action," and wants to hoodwink the masses once again by this stratagem. The Hitler Party speaks with vulgar demagogy of the "struggle against reaction." With the aid of the attitude of specious opposition adopted by the National-Socialists and the Social-Democracy, the bourgeoisie is trying to attain a consolidation and development of the fascist dictatorship against the proletariat, making more pronounced use of the Nazis for terrorist measures of violence, and at the same time utilising the S.P.D. as their main social support against strikes, etc.

The Nazi paper, the *Preussische Zeitung* writes as follows on the question of coming to an agreement with the leadership of the A.D.G.B.:

"One should especially read the programme of the trade unions . . . A common way is being found to pure authoritarian socialism. A gulf is revealing itself between the trade unions and the Jewish-Moscovite (!) leadership of the Red front. The trade union officials, who have not yet become bureaucrats and who have behind them a lifetime of service to the working-class, know that they may just as easily be strung up on the next lamp-post one day by the R.T.U.O. at the command of the Jews. There has always been a contradiction between world economy, world revolutionaries, the Bolshevik radical strata among the litterateurs, and the trade union officials. In circumstances when the connection between things is being destroyed by an irresponsible murder campaign of the Jewish-controlled Red Press, at a moment when one-third of the German people threatens to place itself under the leadership of the Red Comintern in Moscow, the responsible elements in the trade union movement have at length recognised their duty—to preserve the German workers from destruction by Moscow and from destruction by reaction. This quiet united front of the socialists (!) is now being formed. It will usher in a great process of understanding. We have now to sweep away misunderstandings . . . ."—*Preussische Zeitung*, Sept. 3 and 4, 1932.)

We thus see, on the one hand, how seriously this National-Socialist paper judges the more rapid rapprochement of the National-Socialists with the leaders of the A.D.G.B. And how, on the other hand, fascism is possessed with fear for the revolutionary movement in Germany.

We must, as a Communist Party, really and truly carry on the struggle against the class enemies on the various fronts by organising mass direct action in the factories, and at the unemployment registration offices. We must understand how to raise the revolutionary power of the masses, and their confidence in victory, and how to rally ever broader masses around our Party.

Against the German bourgeoisie's programme of starvation and war, against the lying promises of the National-Socialists, and the new deceitful manœuvres of the social-fascist leaders, we set our programme of the revolutionary way out of the crisis as a programme of daily struggle, inseparably connecting the struggle for immediate demands, with the ultimate revolutionary aim of our proletarian struggle.

In the struggle against the armaments programme, in the struggle against the programme of starvation and emergency decrees of German imperialism, we have issued a manifesto in which are contained, in their essence, the most important slogans for partial demands, but in conjunction with the slogans for ultimate aims, to raise on this basis the question of the struggle for the social and national liberation of the toiling people in the present period.

Our new manifesto contains our attitude in principle to the emergency decree and to the armaments programme of the bourgeoisie. It fixes the responsibility for the wage-cuts upon the S.P.D. and the A.D.G.B., makes the proposal to all workers organised in the S.P.D., the free trade unions and the Christian trade unions, to form a broad united front for action, proposes the fighting alliance of the factory workers with the unemployed, and contains, above all, once more the revolutionary battle-cry, for the social and national liberation of Germany, from the yoke of Versailles.

Almost all the speakers have emphasised how extraordinarily complicated are the conditions under which the Communist Party of Germany has to solve the tasks confronting it.

We are fighting under the conditions of an economic crisis which has taken on peculiarly severe forms in Germany, against a bourgeoisie which possesses great experience and an extraordinary capacity for manœuvring, against the double exploitation by both German and international finance capital. In our references to the Papen programme and to the Schleicher armaments programme we have shown how German imperialism is trying to better its condition, how it is able to strengthen itself in the play of forces of imperialism by an unbounded exploitation of the masses, by a further development of fascist dictatorship, how it is trying to improve its position by an increase of imperialist armaments.

Even at the second World Congress, Lenin spoke of how the imperialist robber treaty of Versailles and the system of slavery which Versailles signifies, are approaching their inevitable downfall in connection with the growing strength of the socialist Soviet Union and the growth of the contradictions in capitalist countries.

To-day, at the end of capitalist stabilisation and with the transition to a new cycle of a series of wars and revolutions, we can already see in actual fact that the Versailles system is growing more and more brittle through the accentuation of the internal and external contradictions of imperialism, through the

increasing revolutionary upsurge, through the mighty progress of socialist construction in the Soviet Union. The key-point of the whole Versailles system is Germany. This country can now show new facts indicating the accentuation of the already existing contradictions. We are not fatalists, and therefore we know how great is the responsibility which the German proletariat and the Communist Party bear before history.

If we try, with our own strength, with revolutionary initiative and with implacable clarity, really to improve our methods of work, if we create a preponderance of the revolutionary forces as against the forces of fascist dictatorship, then without doubt, in view of the peculiar intricacy of the situation in Germany, of the accentuations which are taking place within the country, we will succeed in hastening on the process of development of the German revolution.

From agitation and propaganda, we must go on to the real launching of struggles and direct action. The mass strike, and the political general strike represent our main weapons of struggle at the present stage. We must unleash the forces of resistance, and proletarian rebellion against fascist dictatorship on all fronts. It cannot be denied that despite great weaknesses and defects in our work, the German Communist Party has grown and marched forward.

Our task now is not only to make good the loss of tempo which has been sustained, but with all our strength to fortify our own forces, and those of the proletariat in the revolutionary advance against the fascist dictatorship.

Germany's transition to revolution, the victory of the proletariat over bloody fascism, may represent a decisive factor for the preponderance of revolution over counter-revolution and fascism throughout the whole globe.

Germany's decision will inevitably draw other countries into the whirlpool of severe conflicts.

But precisely because the situation is so complicated, because Germany constitutes a key-point of extraordinary importance for the further development of history and politics—just for this reason we must set our face against any ultra-simple view of the path of development of the German proletarian revolution. Let our comrades at this Plenum not forget what was once said by Comrade Lenin when he drew a comparison between the German and the Russian revolution, when he declared that in Russia it was easier to seize power, but more difficult to carry socialism into effect.

In Germany, he said, it is the opposite ! There, it is more difficult to seize power but carrying socialism into effect is easier in this country than in Russia. In Germany, despite all difficulties in the camp of the class enemy, despite the differences within the camp of the bourgeoisie, we still have the strongest fascist power in the world. This does not mean that this power may not suffer losses to-morrow or the next day in position and in strength. It does not mean that the splits and cleavages in the camp of the bourgeoisie may not produce new and surprising conflicts, within quite a short space of time. That is indeed not only probable but even certain. We must and shall measure our power with this antagonist, if the proletariat is to be victorious. When we are faced by such a strong fascist power and if we want to fulfil the great historical tasks which have here been set us by the XII. Plenum, we must carry the whole Party along with us, activise the last member of it, to be able to lead the proletariat to victory in the revolutionary clashing of class forces.

If the last few weeks have shown us that the rise of the wave of fascism has already begun to ebb, this does not represent more than a small beginning in the improvement in our revolutionary mass work. We believe that in the further course of development we will make fresh progress in the struggle against fascist dictatorship, by means of the inner strengthening of the Party, and by developing higher revolutionary forms of the offensive of the proletariat. The XII Plenum, of the Comintern, and our Russian brother Party have provided the German Party by their fraternal Bolshevik advice, with valuable weapons for the struggle against fascism and capitalism. Both for Germany and for other countries, indeed, for the whole world, a thorough analysis has been given of the present situation and the revolutionary tasks have been assigned in connection with the decisions of the XII Plenum. We want to say quite openly that the Bolshevik assistance rendered by the Comintern has greatly aided us, strengthened and steeled us in the Bolshevik sense, especially during the recent period in Germany in view of the difficult problems we have had to face. Herr Trotsky recently had the face to say as follows :

> "The Comintern, however, does not want—more properly speaking, is afraid—to render an account in regard to the actual character of the present world situation. The presidium of the Comintern takes refuge in hollow agitational pamphlets. The leading Party of the Comintern, the C.P.S.U., has not taken any definite stand. It is as though the ' leaders of the world proletariat ' had their mouths full of water ! They remain intentionally silent. They have set about digging themselves in. They hope to mark time. They have replaced the policy of Lenin by the policy of Vogel and Strauss."

We have only the most profound contempt for this utterance of a counter-revolutionary. The growing authority of the Comintern, the gigantic extent of its efforts, the deepening of its influence among the revolutionary proletariat of the world and the growth of revolutionary forces, are clearly reflected at this XII Plenum. Germany is the country in which under certain circumstances, the die may be cast in the immediate future. It will be our task not only to

(*Continued on page* 8.)

PRINTED BY BLACKFRIARS PRESS, LTD., SMITH-DORRIEN ROAD, LEICESTER, ENGLAND.